

# THE Harbinger of Light.

## A MONTHLY JOURNAL

DEVOTED TO

ZOISTIC SCIENCE, FREE THOUGHT, SPIRITUALISM  
AND THE HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY.

"Dawn approaches, Error is passing away, Men arising shall hail the day."

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A LETTER in another column calls attention to the subject of Capital Punishment, and urges Spiritualists to take the initiative in agitating for its abolition. The suggestion is appropriate, for although from a humanitarian point of view the infliction of the death penalty as a punishment for crime is unjustifiable, from the Spiritualistic standpoint it is not only wrong in principle, but in a utilitarian aspect; as the murderer's soul driven out of the body by a revengeful law, still haunts the earth, and prompts others of like nature to repeat its crime.

Let us, however, view the matter from a humanitarian standpoint, and consider, first, what is the cause of the principal crime for which the law takes the life of the offender. Envy, hatred, malice, and covetousness, arising from an undue action of the inferior parts of the brain are, in the great majority of cases, the motor to its commission. What is the cause of this undue action? Generally hereditary predisposition, a defective mental conformation which under favourable educational influences might during the plastic period of infancy and youth have been considerably modified, but which the individual's environments have favoured the development of until under some unfortunate combination of circumstances a crisis occurs involving the destruction of a human being. Human nature revolts at the act, but in the detestation of the crime the public are too apt to include the perpetrator without examining into the causes that led to its commission.

In the matter of suicide, humanitarian ideas are so far gaining ground that juries generally assume unconsciousness of mind or temporary insanity as the cause of the act; and does not this apply equally to the murderer? Is there one murderer in twenty who is so *compos mentis* as to deliberately weigh the probable

consequences of his contemplated crime? If it were so, the almost certainty of his detection, execution, and (if he believed in a hell) eternal punishment, would certainly deter him from the commission of it; his hand would be paralysed at the thought of the consequences. Examine the annals of crime and find if you can instances where the fear of consequences has prevented the commission of capital offences. Chicken heartedness or fear of the ability to accomplish the act is the only deterrent where the moral principles implied in the word "conscience" have been dormant. Execution and murders go on side by side; the former exercising no perceptible influence upon the number or frequency of the latter. How then, it will be asked, are such crimes to be prevented? Are these murderously-inclined individuals to manifest their predilections with impunity? Certainly not; but we must remember that they are human beings, having immortal souls, and not treat them as wild beasts, to be shot or hung at the first manifestation of their destructive propensities. Education of the moral faculties is the preventive, but it will be generations before this can be so perfectly applied as to destroy the occasional preponderance of the evil passions which result in murderous crimes; meantime, the law must stretch out its hand and say, "you have infringed upon the rights and liberty of your brother man; you have violated the moral law and must be restrained from doing further injury to society during your lifetime, or at least until such time as you are by the cultivation of your moral nature fitted to take your place in the outer world."

The law as at present constituted is a law of vengeance, and as such, wrong in principle. To be efficacious it must be repressive and reformatory, removing as far as practicable the causes of crime, impeding the execution of it, and endeavouring by every possible means to convince the convicted criminal that his detention is rendered necessary by his antagonism to society, and not in retaliation for the injury he has done to any of its members. The adoption of this principle would do more towards the prevention of crime and the amelioration of its consequences than fear of the gallows ever did or is likely to do, even supplemented with the bugbear of a fiery hell.

## FAMILIAR LETTERS ON SPIRITUALISM.

## XII.

"I do think that many mysteries ascribed to our own inventions have been the courteous revelations of spirits (for those noble essences in heaven bear a friendly regard unto their fellow natures on earth). Therefore, for spirits, I am so far from denying their existence, that I could easily believe that not only whole countries, but particular persons have their tutelary and guardian angels."—*Religio Medici*. SIR THOS. BROWNE.

RESPECTED FRIEND,—The heading of my fourth letter states, "The history of Spiritualism is the history of Man;" and it is an undoubted fact, that inasmuch as man in his proper nature is spirit, so you cannot think of man in any of his relations without coming into contact with spiritual operations. Take away, if it were possible, the spiritual basis which underlies all things, and there could be no longer any manifestation of forms or any of those animated features which nature reveals. Spirit is man, and man is spirit; and so on throughout the vast universe until you rise in thought to the Supreme, and find the utterance evidently most true—"God is a Spirit."

Now, if man be a spirit, spiritual operations should be perfectly natural to him; and into the question of Spiritualism it should be the most express duty of every man to enter. I am perfectly aware that spiritual operations are of a most subtle character, and that the realisation of these is deemed familiar but to a few persons. It does not follow, however, that this is the natural order of things, but rather arises from the attention or otherwise with which the spiritual nature, in conjunction with the material, has been cultivated. Man, the earth-creature, presents a remarkable combination; there is evidently an internal and an external, not necessarily separated by a discrete degree, but separated they are in nine-tenths of earth's children, and in consequence of a neglect to blend those elements which ought to be in perfect harmony. If man on earth is a fallen creature, and needs salvation, it is to be found in the fact that he has sustained a breach in the constituent parts of his being; the internal being separated from the external, and thus inharmonious. To be saved he must revert to the condition indicated—one of perfect harmony, and in which the external and the internal elements of his nature are to be blended for the highest and best of ends. Now, as I understand it, this is the object of the Spiritualism which I desire to commend to your acceptance; and I do so with the greater confidence because I know that it has effected such results in my own experience.

But to revert to Phenomenal Spiritualism; there is in connection with this what is termed mediumship. The agent, who is called the medium, and his mediumship, are very important facts in relation to spiritual operations; indeed, apart from the means thus afforded, it would be impossible to reap the results which Modern Spiritualism exhibits. This question of mediumship, however, involves many difficult considerations, as to the *specialty* which pertains to it; the almost impossibility of controlling its operations; the seemingly grave errors and contradictions which arise; and the temptations on the part of many mediums to mingle the false with the true, the artificial with the real, in the exercise of this ability to connect the two worlds. Many arguments and illustrations have been brought forward to explain why this possession must of necessity be so limited, being only conferred on a few comparatively who possess a distinctive mental psychical organisation. There may be some truth in this supposition, but we prefer to believe in addition to this, that it is because the cultivation of the spiritual faculties have been neglected and suffered to fall into disuse in the experience of the great bulk of mankind. I am also inclined to believe that the mediumistic quality prevails to a far greater extent than is imagined, but that it is exercised in secret, and the fact of its operation often not recognised by the possessor. For after all, what is this faculty of mediumship but a sensibility to spiritual impression, and the ability

to accept and use such impressions or intercourse? I know perfectly well that, years before I understood, or took the slightest interest in theoretical Spiritualism, my mind was exercised in this very direction, but the fact was unrecognised by myself; and I also know that since the theory of Modern Spiritualism has become familiar to the public at large, there are those who, while they are loud in their denunciation of the phenomena, secretly cultivate a power which they now find that they also possess.

Taking all the circumstances together, I do not think that the possession of mediumship is anything like so special as it is said to be. It is God's best gift to mankind universally—to be cultivated, I grant, and thus developed, but possible to all men as the acquirement of education is possible to all who comply with the conditions. I am inclined to think that nine-tenths of the evils attendant on Modern Spiritualism arise from the assumption that mediumship is a rare and special gift. In the olden times, and indeed within the last century, the rare possession of general knowledge and the cultivation of the intellect, even the ability to read and write, were regarded as the peculiar right of the few, and used as a power to enslave the many who were less fortunate. How altered the circumstances are now; and it will be equally so in relation to spiritual matters when it becomes known that the personal power to communicate with spiritual beings is the right of all, and the possession and privilege of all.

I am inclined to think further, that the reason why it is so difficult to control the operations of the mediumistic faculty is because we are not fully acquainted with the operations of mind either in a general or special degree. If there is one thing more than another of which man is ignorant, it is himself; little as he knows of the operations of nature around him, he is far more ignorant of the workings of his own nature. Consequently, dealing with those of our fellows who possess this mediumship in an especial manner, we are working with an instrument of which we know little or nothing; and it will only be when we have arrived at such knowledge of mental operations as shall make us to fully understand the laws and conditions which govern such operations, that we shall be enabled to enjoy the full advantage which is thereby afforded. Then, as to the grave errors, and even contradictions, and the temptations on the part of mediums to produce by artificial means what is looked for in the exercise of spiritual powers; the difficulty on the one hand and the deception on the other, will in due time give way before increasing knowledge, and the recognition of those principles of right which should govern the movements of all men irrespective of mere worldly considerations. With respect to the question of mediumship, as of Spiritualism generally, when the elementary stage has been passed, and men on the earth progress to higher planes of spiritual life, it will then be found that as darkness disappears before the approach of light, so will all the objectionable features of Spiritualism; and that which to-day is regarded with either a doubtful or repulsive feeling, will then be accepted as the blessed means to secure man's highest degree of earthly happiness.

Now, to bring this series of letters to a conclusion, I feel that the question as to the special attitude which I would have you assume in regard to this important phase of life, is worthy of serious consideration. I know very well the difficulty which prevails in this respect with those who are, as it were, halting between two opinions; and indeed, not unfrequently with those who are satisfied that Spiritualism is of paramount importance. It is in this respect we are affected in our earthly relationships, and in our intercourse with our fellow men; and strange to say, in consequence of the prejudice which prevails in the minds of men, either in favour of a pet theory, or against one which seems to conflict with foregone conclusions, there is trouble enough between those who differ in judgment, and who are bold enough to assert their differences. The question then is, are we to be governed by such considerations when a strict sense of right seems to call us to take any special course? Whenever you make

up your mind to allow it to be known that you are a Spiritualist, then you will find that your dearest friends and associates, as well as the multitude with whom you come in contact, will express either the most extreme pity, or treat you with ridicule and contempt; they will even avoid your company, and refuse to have that familiar intercourse with you which prevails among the men of the world in general. The experience which awaits those who are courageous enough to avow their principles, however pure and correct the life may be, if those principles are at variance with the orthodox line of thought which prevails in one degree or another throughout the religious world, will be anything but smooth. Dare to think for yourself in opposition to the current thought, and depend upon it you will soon find out what persecution of the most painful character means. I have no hesitation in saying that I have personally realised this, and that it is not an easy thing to stand like a rock in the midst of the tempest thus raised. It will probably occur to you to ask—can I live without the patronage and smile of the Church, and outside the influence which thus prevails? I answer, you can, and with a degree of internal comfort and happiness which can never be realised within the compass of that influence. Your duty lies here: be faithful in the pursuit of knowledge; be consistent in following your convictions; determine to exert an influence for good on all around you; find comfort in honesty of purpose, and a determination to lay a good foundation for the time to come; and while you use all the means at your command to rise in the scale of being, cultivating a God-like humanity, ever remember that Spiritualism is not an end, but the means by which the most glorious end in existence is to be attained; and follow it accordingly. Then, I promise you, in the midst of trial and conflict, an inward joy now, and in the anticipation of future felicity, a basis of calm strength and satisfaction which shall make life a pathway growing brighter and brighter unto the more perfect day! Farewell!

Your faithful friend,

H. J. B.

Melbourne, March, 1882.

#### THE MATERIALISATION CIRCLE.

THE applications for admission to this circle, which are numerous, have been gone through up to date, and the majority of them have been passed. These will be taken, in the main, in the order of date. Due intimation will be given to each application when their turn has arrived. A few of the applications have been laid aside for farther inquiry, the writers not being personally known, and having neglected to give the name of some Spiritualist to whom the committee may refer, which was one of the conditions.

N.B.—Known representative Spiritualists from other parts of Victoria, or from neighbouring colonies, who may be visiting Melbourne, and may desire to witness the manifestations, will be admitted whenever possible, but it is absolutely necessary for them to give timely notice.

#### THE "SPIRITUALIST" NEWSPAPER.

WE notice with regret that the above well-conducted weekly ceased publication (after an existence of thirteen years), on January, 27th last. During its rather lengthy career, the *Spiritualist* has had among its contributors some of the ablest and most eminent writers connected with the subject it represented; but of late the establishment of other journals has divided the talent, and doubtless curtailed the subscription list. Although its publication as a weekly has ceased, there is a probability of its being resuscitated in the form of a monthly illustrated journal which, if sufficient support is promised in the interim, Mr. Harrison will commence the publication of in March. We shall be pleased to hear of its being successfully started in its new form.

In Mr. W. B. Button's communication on "Faith," published in last issue, page 2162, the name "Nicodemus" was printed instead of "Nathaniel."

## To Correspondents.

Communications for insertion in this Journal should be plainly written, and as concise as possible.

### BRISBANE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

DEAR SIR, — The truth of the old adage—

"It's an ill-wind that blows no one good."

is made manifest every day; such has been the case with us, because the ill-wind on this occasion blew just in the right direction, and brought about the very thing we have been wanting for a long time past. Professor Gilbert, the Phenologist, who lectures on the New Physiognomy, as founded upon Physiology and Phenology, has been with us for some weeks past, and has given a course of lectures on that Science, all of which were given in an able and accomplished manner. He makes his lectures especially interesting, and leaves not a doubt on the minds of those who attend, that he is thoroughly master of his profession.

A short time ago the Professor delivered a lecture entitled "Food, Alcohol and the Constitution of Man," in the Temperance Hall, under the auspices of the Total Abstinence Society. At the conclusion of the lecture a clergyman rose, and said he had never heard the horrors of intemperance shown up in such a plain manner before, he was sure that if all the school children of the city could hear such a lecture it would have a great effect upon them, he then asked the Professor that if the school children were gathered together, for that purpose, would he deliver his lecture to them. He at once agreed to give his services. The Total Abstinence Society took the matter up, had circulars printed and sent round to the superintendents and teachers of the Sunday schools, engaged the largest hall in the city, and advertised the lecture. It was to take place on a Saturday afternoon so that all the school children and teachers might be present. Saturday afternoon came, the lecturer was there with his charts all hung up ready for the lecture, but where was the audience, where, the eight or nine hundred children that were expected, and that were supposed to have been invited? The lecture was gone through to a small audience, those who were attracted by the advertisement. At the conclusion the Professor, found out the cause of this unexpected state of affairs, this fiasco of what was to have been a good thing for the children. What was it? Simply this: for two Sunday night's previous to this, the Professor had delivered two lectures, on "Free-thought in the light of Phenology." Here was the secret: he was a Free-thinker, they could not trust their Sabbath school children before one with such principles, for fear they might learn something they were not taught in the Sunday schools. The Sunday school authorities ignored the invitations and purposely kept the children away from the lecture.

And these people would look you in the face and tell you that God approved of their action, that they do right in cramming children's minds with Theological humbug, but that it would be an unpardonable sin for them to teach their children how wonderfully and fearfully they are made, or the natural laws of their being. The result of this insult to the Professor, was, that it has made him lecture more strongly than ever for freedom of thought, and at a lecture on the following Sunday evening, he stated that it was "The last straw that broke the camel's back," that he was now determined not to spare them any longer, he had suffered at their hands, but the worm will turn when trod on. The result is that we are now listening to a really excellent course of Sunday evening lectures, in the largest hall in the city, the admirable Albert Hall. The subject of the first lecture was "God in nature," of the second, last Sunday, "Man in Nature," the one next Sunday, being "Man, a Spirit," and the following one, "Religion and Science." The audience increases every Sunday, the one last Sunday in my opinion, being larger than at any of the churches, showing which way the wind blows. The Professor, in his lecture last Sunday on "Man in Nature," argued

that "The church is losing its hold upon the people, in consequence of its practically ignoring all that part of Gods moral government which pertains to the physical organization, to things material and secular, as an essential part of religious truth, and that since all truth and all law, whether pertaining to the body or the spirit, is from God, all is equally important, and that the attempt to take from the eternal sacredness of any class of truth, or to shut our eyes to them and refuse to teach them is the worst form of practical atheism and infidelity, and that if religious teachers wish to retain their hold upon the people, they must step to the front and lead the thought and progress of the people, instead of hanging back and becoming a positive clog and hindrance. That the refusal to do this is the worst and most dangerous form of practical atheism." The Professor has a good delivery, pleasant and entertaining and secures the attention of his audience throughout. When he leaves us he will carry with him the good wishes of a great many friends he has made during his stay, and should he visit Melbourne, I am sure you will be glad of the addition to your band of workers, in the cause of progress.

Yours truly,  
GEO. SMITH.

### ABOLITION OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

SIR,—I am encouraged to offer the following suggestion by the thought that there can be but few Spiritualists who are not opposed to capital punishment; I infer this from the fact of their all *knowing* that the execution of the murderer does not relieve society of his baneful influence. To my mind, this fact alone, ought to be sufficient to move every Spiritualist to some effort in the direction of abolishing the death penalty.

With your permission, Sir, I will, at a future time, advance some reasons in favour of the abolition of death punishment, which will, I trust, appeal to the good sense of those of your readers who are not Spiritualists. At present I am content with expressing the hope that some influential and practical gentlemen will give my proposal their favourable consideration and active support.

My suggestion is that petitions from the Victorian Spiritualists, praying for the abolition of capital punishment, be persistently presented, session after session, to both Houses of Parliament. The success which Sir Wilfrid Lawson achieved, by this method of persistent action, in getting the House of Commons to recognise the principle of Local Option, should be sufficient encouragement to us to make the effort here indicated. I do not of course wish it to be understood that the signatures to the petitions should be exclusively those of Spiritualists.

Yours &c.,  
C. R.

March 10th, 1882.

### AN APPEAL.

WE are in receipt of the following letter from Mr. J. N. Holmes, the well-known Materializing Medium, and will gladly receive and forward any amounts handed to us, on behalf of the fund:—

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

MY DEAR SIR,—Will you be so kind as to notice our call for aid in your paper? The friends here are raising a fund of \$500 to enable us to save our dear old home from being sold to satisfy a mortgage. One half of the amount has been subscribed and the prospect is the entire amount will be raised if the friends will kindly extend a helping hand.

My health has been such as to prevent my exercising my mediumship, now over two years, hence the debt, which was unavoidable.

Vineland, N. J., January 15th, 1882.

666.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

"Incidit in Scyllam qui vult vitare Charybdim."—*Virgil.*

SIR,—A Queensland Unitarian minister, in a letter of Nov. 30, 1881, addressed to you, attempts to show that the number of the Beast (666) signifies not a man, as the text says, but a number of years, which he obtains by deducting the year 1215, the year on which the Ecumenical Council of the Lateran was held, from the year A. D. 1881. In doing so, however, the writer gives neither rhyme nor reason, and he allows the reader to settle for himself the difficulty in assuming that "John of Patmos" saw in a vision what was going to be done *anno domini* 1215, and that a minister in Queensland would wait until 1881 to deduct the number of the former date from the latter in order to make it tally with 666. This is evidently a most palpable error, and one into which an enlightened Unitarian minister should not have fallen.

The correct solution of this Gordian knot of theology was given by Renan, in his masterly work, *Antichrist*, which was published several years ago, and in which he showed plainly and rationally that by his number 666 John meant to designate the Emperor Nero, expressed cabalistically by using the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, which represent also numbers, as in Greek, the word adopted being the Hebrew inscription on certain coins at the time circulating in Palestine and the East, namely, "Neron Quesar," or "Neron Kaiser." The reason for thus hiding so terrible a name as that of Nero, one of the most incarnate haters and persecutors of the early Christians, is perfectly obvious, as the direct mentioning of his name in full would only have added to the cruelty of that monster in human shape, and would have been a wanton and unreasonable provocation of the wrath of the imperial beast. Similarly, the word "Beast" has also been specially adopted to suit Nero, who on certain festivities dressed himself up as a bear to violate the Christian virgins of Rome publicly in this beastly domino disguise.

Here, truly, is wisdom and also reason; but not in a Unitarian minister's highly problematical and arbitrary subtraction sum.—Yours fraternally,

C. W. ROHNER.

Benalla, 21st Feb., 1882.

### THOUGHT-READING BY SPIRITS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

SIR,—I will feel much obliged if you will kindly inform me if your experience and observation have enabled you to form any well-founded conclusion as to whether all or only some of the spirits who come about us can read our thoughts. The importance of the question as affecting spirit identity is too apparent to need remark.—Yours, &c.

C. R.

12th January, 1882.

[We fully realise the importance of our correspondent's question, and will endeavour to give him the result of our experience on the matter referred to.

From a spiritual aspect, "Thought" is a substance evolved by the action of the mind, and giving form to the idea which is the spiritual basis of it. A magnetised sensitive, when in the clairvoyant state, can readily read the ideas that arise in the mind of the magnetiser, or anyone who can be brought into magnetic sympathy with them; but they cannot give them definite form unless they are so formulated in the mind of the person they are examining. Hence it follows that the clairvoyant sensitive, seeing with the spiritual senses, cannot decipher more than the idea unless the thought belonging to it is distinctly expressed in the mind. This refers to ideas and thoughts in the course of evolution at the time, and does not include the psychometric faculty possessed in degree by a large number of sensitives. Thoughts evolved in the mental sphere of an individual are impressed upon the brain with more or less distinctness in accordance with their vividness and



intensity, and the will-power of the sensitive can bring these to the surface by a process analogous to that which takes place when the individual recalls an event in their past career.

These powers of Thought-reading and psychometry belong to the spiritual nature of man, and hence are carried with him into the spirit world, and can be exercised under certain conditions in connection with those still in the body. *There is still the necessity for rapport* which cannot exist to any appreciable extent where the minds occupy different planes of development. A coarse and undeveloped spirit, even though possessed of a clairvoyant faculty, can only read those thoughts which are on its plane, and consequently the mind of a refined individual would be undecipherable; only those thoughts pertaining to the animal nature could be seen.

Again, spirits on a higher plane than the individual under cognizance do not, as a rule, see those thoughts which are gross and unspiritual; but where there is a need for any special good purpose, their superior spiritual power enables them to penetrate the darker sphere of thought and appropriate what they find there. Experience leads to this conclusion: that those spirits who occupy the spheres contiguous to the earth-plane cannot, as a rule, read clearly the thoughts of those still in the body, though they may sometimes in the emanations of a circle gather fragments which the sitters often assist them to put into form.—*Ed. H of Light.*

#### THE DEITY OF JESUS, AND THE REVISED NEW TESTAMENT.

DEUS HOMO. CITE DEUS HOMO? The Anselmic query has never been answered—at least, never answered to comport with the demands of unsophisticated reason. The Deity potentially enshrined in human form, living and acting on the earth, a co-equal member of a triune hypothesis—how strange the mythos! To the Hebrew in his highest inspirations, with his "The Lord our God in one Lord," "God is not a man"—to the Hebrew, *foolishness*. To the Mohammedan, with his *La Elilāh Ellāla*, "There is no God but God," "One God alone, and without partners"—to him, *blasphemy*. But to the Buddhist, the Neo-Platonist, the Osirian, and ancient Egyptian, with their various triadations,—to them, a familiar doctrine and a vital truth.

And to the ordinary Christian, what is this dogma of the Incarnation? What, but the very life-breath of his religious consciousness; the supreme fact in the Universe, before which all others pale into comparative insignificance. The other churchal doctrines—Biblical Infallibility, Total Depravity, Atonement, Endless Sufferings, and the rest, grave and important as they are, become insipid beside that of the Incarnation—the Deity of Jesus Christ. You may tell a popular Christian that the Bible is a collection of various books of less or greater worth; that it has a history similar to that of other ancient volumes; that its ethics are not always of the highest, nor are they at all times consistent; that its astronomy is not entirely in harmony with the latest revelations of the telescope, nor its geology quite such as Lyell would have written; that it has not a few blemishes, and that in it are many things which would have been better out of it; you may tell him this, and still retain his friendship.

You may dilute Total Depravity until it, becomes only "the utter disarrangedness of man's faculties,"\* and the crowds who applauded to the echo the Boston Monday lecturer, will deem your theology quite sound. The Atonement may be reduced to "The love of God drawing man back into itself, and thus reconciling him to God as his Father, and to man as his brother,"† and though the doctrine will perhaps be pronounced "unsatisfactory" and its author be "cautioned," he will nevertheless be allowed to keep his seat in the synagogue, and to enjoy, with even fresh accessions, the fat of the land. Or, you may hold that Endless Torment is

not the fate of the majority, but only of those who, after a term of probation extending beyond this life, are still wilfully impenitent: you may think thus, and the churches will supply thousands of sympathisers. But, suggest to the Christian that his Christ was not *wholly divine*, that he was a MAN; better perhaps, more richly endowed with spiritual graces, than most men; but still entirely *human*—venture to tell him this, and you ensure for yourself the maledictions of his virtuous wrath, the strongest fulminations of his theologic ire. You become an outcast, an infidel, an atheist! He will tell you that your aim is to deprive him of the sunlight of his soul; that from his moral firmament you are snatching the day-star of life and hope; that you are enshrouding the divine Sun in clouds of Cimmerian blackness, wrapping the whole heavens in the pall of endless night; or, that you are drifting him, as you drift yourself, hopeless, helpless, homeless—without rudder or compass—upon a shoreless sea! This is no fancy picture, no exaggerated sketch; it is the common language of the pulpit, when the Cerberus who guards the mystic dogmata barks at Advancing Thought.

And yet, in the light of Intuition and Common Sense, how lacking in every element that can commend itself to acceptance is the doctrine which the churches so tenaciously uphold! Jesus, the young man of Nazareth; and yet the God of Heaven and Earth. Jesus, the Jew; and yet the Creator and Father of all peoples.‡ Jesus, the child of an unwedded maiden, the descendant of Rahab the harlot, and of David (one of the vilest characters that ever defiled the record of the human race); and yet identical with Him who, amid the thunders and lightnings, the clouds and thick darkness of Sinai, uttered the command, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." Jesus, who sought refuge among humble villagers; and yet the Everlasting Spirit "who inhabiteth eternity," "who dwelleth not in temples made with hands." Jesus, the weary wanderer, having not where to lay his head; and yet the glorious King enthroned in the heavens. Jesus, whose wish was thwarted and power restricted by a few persons' unbelief (Matthew, XIII, 58); and yet the Omnipotent, with whom all things are possible. Jesus, buffeted and scourged, condemned by petty rulers, dying on a malefactor's cross; and yet "the blessed and only Potentate"—"pavilioned in splendour, and girded with praise"!!

But the theologians are unconcerned about Intuition and Common Sense; the sheet-anchor of their creeds is a book; they refer us to the BIBLE as alone containing "the Sacred Oracles of God." Let us then revert to this alleged ultimate court of appeal, and let us view it in its latest and amended form, as under the supervision of some of the greatest scholars and biblicists of the age, it is issued from the two highest seats of learning in Christendom.

At the present juncture, however, we are reminded that exigencies of space preclude an exhibition of the New Testament doctrine regarding the Godhead; such of our readers as may be so disposed are urged to take up the Revised Version and see how great or how little support is therein given to the dogma of Christ's deity; let it suffice the object of the present article to indicate some of the chief textual changes affecting this doctrine in the new Version. Placing ourselves under the guidance of one of the most scholarly and candid members of the Revision Company,§ we note the following:—

(1).—Luke ii., 33, "And his father and his mother were marvelling at the things which were spoken concerning him (Jesus)." In the old Version the statement is "And Joseph and his mother marvelled, &c.," thus ignoring the *paternity* of

† The Rev. W. Page Roberts, successor to the lamented Frederick Denison Maurice, in a sermon recently preached in London on the Russian persecution of the Jews, asked, "Do these burning, ravaging Christians know that their Saviour, the God they worship, WAS A JEW?"

§ "Revised Texts and Margins of the New Testament." By G. Vance Smith, D.D., B.A., Ph.D. (Unitarian Association, London). This little book can be cordially recommended as concise, accurate, and instructive.

\* Vide Rev. Joseph Cook's lecture on Channing.

† Vide Rev. Charles Strong's celebrated article in the *Victorian Review*, October 1880.

Joseph and leaving room for the fiction that the father of Jesus was the HOLY GHOST.

(II.)—John v., 44., "How can ye believe, which receive glory one of another, and the glory that cometh from the *only God ye seek!* not?" The old Version rendered "the only God" as *God only*. It will be observed that the new translation distinguishes more clearly between the speaker (Jesus) and God. This distinction is still more plainly made in John vi., 27, where the "God the Father" of the old Version (suggesting the trinitarian formula "God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost," is altered in the new into "the FATHER *even* God."

(III.)—Matthew xiv., 36. Here the already explicit declaration, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only," is rendered still stronger in the Revised Version by the addition of the words "*neither the Son.*"

(IV.)—1 Timothy, ii., 5. In the old Version the humanity of Jesus was strongly declared here, but it is increased in the new, which runs—"There is one God, one mediator also between God and men, *himself man*, Christ Jesus." And in the following chapter (iii., 16.) occurs a note-worthy change, where "God was manifest in the flesh," becomes "*He who was manifested in the flesh.*" the word *God* being condemned (see margin) as quite unwarranted.

(V.)—1 John iii., 16. "Hereby know we love, because he laid down his life for us." In the old Version, the words, "of God" were interpolated after *love*.

(VI.)—Romans xiv., 10. In this verse, the words of the old Version were "the judgment-seat of Christ;" they now become "the judgment-seat of God."

(VII.)—1 John v., 7. "For there are three that bear record in heaven," &c. This famous passage—the only text in the whole Bible giving an unequivocal support to the doctrine of the Trinity—is now admitted by all to be a FORGERY, and of course finds no place in the Revised Version.

(VIII.)—Titus ii., 13, and 1 Peter, i., 1. An alteration has been made in these two places supporting the orthodox doctrine regarding Jesus; and Bishop Moorhouse, in a lecture some time since, boasted of these changes as clearly confirming the popular Christian theory. His lordship, however, omitted to state that the *Revisers allowed the ALTERNATIVE RENDERING* (which is that of the old Version) to be given in the MARGIN, and that (as shown by the Appendix) the American Revision Committee recommended the OLD RENDERING in preference to the other. As a matter of fact, the "original Greek" is susceptible of either translation.

In the light of the foregoing facts, and of many others which the diligent student cannot fail to observe, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the drift of our Revised New Testament is not to present Jesus in the aspect of a mystic, supernatural personage, but rather to give him the more lovable lineaments of a BROTHER MAN.

X.

"M. A., Oxon" in *Light* of Feb. 4th, has some excellent criticisms of the Theosophical position as recently set forth in "Fragments of Occult Truth."

MR. STUART CUMBERLAND, the notorious "Exposer" of Spiritualism, has brought down the Rev. J. Page Hopps heavily upon him in a letter to the *Leicester Post*, in consequence of Mr. Cumberland's "insolence" in connection with some reference made by Dr. Thornton to Mr. Hopps at the recent Church Congress discussion on Spiritualism. Mr. Hopps accuses him of "audacious and impudent invention;" and in response to an invitation to Mr. Cumberland's platform, says: "When I want to conduct an experiment, I shall go to a laboratory not to a circus; when I wish to see the beautiful moons of Jupiter or the lovely rings of Saturn, I shall look through a telescope in an Observatory, not through a showman's trumpet at a fair.

## THE RELIGION OF TRUTH.

By H. J. BROWNE.

### PART I.

THAT religion alone can be true which appeals to the hearts of all humanity, which is of universal application, which tends towards the brotherhood of the race and the happiness of all, and which represents God as superior to man's highest conceptions of love, wisdom, and goodness. Religion and theology, which are generally considered to be synonymous terms, are quite distinct. There is but one true religion, whilst there are many theologies. Religion comes from the heart, theology from the head. Our constant aim should be the acquisition of religious knowledge, and a sense of duty should prevent us from disguising our thoughts on religious matters and suppressing that which we know to be true. We should also endeavour at all times to be useful to our fellow men according to our several abilities, being guided by the suggestions of our reason and the sanction of our conscience, rather than by the opinions or beliefs of others, and having absolute confidence in the infinite goodness of that ever-present Power, the divine source of all our faculties; There cannot possibly be any merit in professing to believe to be true that which is not endorsed by our reason and borne out by our experience. We should, therefore, receive no opinion as true merely upon the authority of anyone however eminent he may be considered to be, nor yield assent to any proposition until, by careful examination and consideration, we have convinced ourselves that it is true, or at least of the probability of its truth. Superstition must give place to knowledge, and falsity to truth.

There are no higher or more trustworthy arbiters of truth than our moral feelings and intellectual faculties. Religious truth speaks to the heart, and at once convinces us of its divine origin, requiring no assumed authority to give it weight. All religious truths, which really come from God, commend themselves to us through our moral and religious feelings, thus constituting each one a law unto himself. It is as impossible for us *really* to accept as truth what our minds do not apprehend to be such as it is to see with the eyes of others or to hear with their ears. Everyone's judgment, duly enlightened, should therefore be his own director in matters religious as well as in everything else. "Authority bears no relation to truth." True religion comprises those principles and feelings which influence and direct our daily conduct; in a word, it is the purpose of our hearts. The best way we can serve God is by benefiting our fellow men.

The existence of God is undemonstrable, but when the universality of nature's laws, the beautiful arrangements and exquisite adaptations thereof almost everywhere visible, are earnestly considered, we are forced to the conclusion that there must be a Cause adequate or commensurate thereto, for "matter is essentially passive." Duality universally prevails, mind and matter being co-eternal and co-essential principles. It is equally impossible to define the nature of the omnipotent Divine mind, for whenever finite man attempts to do so, he makes God less than infinite. Proof of this is to be found in the sacred books of all nations. Even man's highest ideal of perfection falls far short of the reality. We can partially apprehend the love, wisdom, and goodness of the Infinite, and we can believe in, but never know God. Knowledge and belief are two different things; the former is derived from evidence presented to the senses; the latter is based on testimony—the one is primary, the other is secondary evidence—the one is absolute, the other is conditional. In knowledge there can exist no doubt; in belief there may. The same evidence in respect to a common occurrence we may accept with full confidence, which, when it relates to one out of the ordinary course of nature's operations, we are justified in rejecting. The laws of nature being the laws of God, all nature is of God, therefore if anything in the world is divine, nature must be so. We have, in fact, two divine revelations, neither of which has been given to any special or

chosen sect or tribe. Both are the heritage of the whole human family. First, the sublime revelation in the works of God, which is ever open to the study of all, and secondly, that inward revelation of the heart which we term conscience, and which, unless our judgments have been warped by false teachings, unerringly impresses us what is right and what is wrong. Referring to the former, all objects of which we are cognizant contain certain properties and qualities which determine their modes of action, and all bodies in nature reciprocally act on each other by virtue of these properties, thereby proving an intelligent indwelling mind in all; and thus, in language plain and impressive, does the Deity speak to man through his works.

The stupendous phenomena which we witness in nature testify, therefore, to the existence of an ever active though invisible Power in all things. This divine Power we term God, whose works are his word. These declare His will, of which nothing can be learned more clearly or explicitly than from the sources which He has placed within our reach, viz., Nature, and our own feelings and cultured intelligence.

The inward revelation of the heart is an unwritten but ever present code. Conscience is that intuitive sense of right and wrong implanted in every one, and like the human mind, is merely an abstract term used to express a combination of our faculties and feelings, but does not express any existing object. Man can disobey, but cannot silence conscience. This ability to choose between right and wrong constitutes man, who is a free agent within the bounds of nature's laws, a responsible being. Had not man this free-will, he would not be an accountable agent, and it is this responsibility which places him above the lower animals. Each man differs from another in phenomenal development and in natural gifts, as one star differs from another in brightness; but one may cultivate his faculties whilst the other allows them to lie dormant, and thus the less gifted may in time surpass the man who is naturally more highly endowed.

All religions contain a certain amount of truth and good, otherwise the moral consciousness in man would reject them as totally unworthy of acceptance. From their consisting principally however of pernicious errors, the beneficial effects which they would otherwise produce are almost entirely counteracted by the evils engendered by their misleading falsities. The forms of religion popular with us chiefly consist of credulity in ancient superstition and the observance of certain traditional ceremonials, resulting in false hopes, pious sentimentalism, and artificial righteousness. True religion, on the other hand, consists of obedience to the dictates of conscience duly enlightened, and the doing of right at all times, not for the purpose of securing selfish pleasures here or hereafter, but from a sense of duty, producing a virtuous life and an enthusiastic morality, which are the best sacrifices we can offer to God, and the surest indications of true spirituality. Believers in false religions can always be distinguished from true religionists, in that they designate as infidels or atheists all who endeavour to purify religious beliefs of their errors, and to point out the higher law or divine truth which tends to the spiritualisation of mankind.

Morality, which is the antithesis of vice, may be divided into absolute morality, and conventional morality. The former is that which requires no time for us to consider, for the still small voice of conscience at once emphatically commends it; the latter is that which is considered right because it has the approval of society. Absolute morality is a fixed and permanent reality, whilst conventional morality is changeable, and is dependent on circumstances. Vice, like darkness, which is the want of light, is the perversion of some natural quality good in itself; for whatever is natural must be good, unless we believe that God is the author of evil as well as of good. All that happens, however, tends to good, for even what appear to be our direst calamities, are but blessings in disguise. Evil is temporary and corrective; good is progressive and eternal. To say that evil and wickedness are naturally inherent in man, is to blaspheme the Source from which we sprang. Man, however, is so constituted that he can, if he chooses,

turn his naturally good propensities to wicked purposes, which is corroborative proof that he is a free agent. No man can be perfect, for "to err is human," but every one can endeavour to resist his ruling passion, or "the sin that doth so easily beset him." When we can realise the presence of God at all times and in all places, and that He is in all, through all, and above all, we shall not be liable to allow our inherently good dispositions to riot in excess and rob us of that peace and happiness which nature intended us to enjoy. By the natural and unerring law of retributive justice, every infraction of nature's commands, sooner or later, brings its own punishment. We should, therefore, strive at all times to fulfil the law written in our hearts, and to do what we feel to be right, irrespective of popular opinion or of conventional practice, for how can we honestly comply with commands, written or otherwise, which are opposed to our moral consciousness and to the convictions of our heart? There is but one God, who is neither *jealous* nor *wrathful*, for his infinite mercy extendeth to all.

As has been truly written, "God never mends His Work, nor corrects His Word, which speaks intelligibly to all; needs no translation and no interpolation: its language being written in our hearts proclaims its divine origin and renders it a standing and imperishable monument of all that God desires of us: the same in all ages, in all climates; and truly enviable is the condition of him who, in the secret chambers of his heart, feels all the beauty and sublimity of this impressive, awakening, and devout appeal: 'He hath showed thee, O man! what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.'"

"All are but parts of one stupendous whole,  
Whose body Nature is and God the soul."

#### THE GOD-IMPREGNATED JEWISH MAIDEN AGAIN.

By C. W. ROHNER, M.D., BENALLA.

"Against stupidity the gods themselves fight in vain."

GERMAN PROVERB.

Nothing can be further from me than a desire to deprive my correspondent, "A Nature Discipulus," of his pet dogma of the Immaculate Conception of Jesus Christ, alias his Parthenogenesis. If a disciple of nature cannot get on without such a belief, by all means let him enjoy his belief and alter his signature in future to a disciple of the unnatural. To me and to many other rational men, Jesus Christ is and will remain a man—a man in the very best sense of the word—but still a man of woman born, like all the rest of men thus ushered into this sublunary world of ours—a mixture of clay and spirit. It is nothing new to me to be called severe in my criticisms and strictures on the views of my opponent, but I also claim to be in earnest search of the truth, and I fully allow that my seriousness may sometimes carry me in this my pursuit of the truth beyond the bounds of unnecessarily polite phraseology. This I cannot help, and in fact I think it would require an absolute change of personality to be or to write like a *Non-ego* or an *After-ego*. I say, in this respect, with Terence: "*Darus sum, non CAlpas*"; "*Rohner sum, non Discipulus Natura*." As to my having "once been as fervent a Catholic as ever breathed," I must simply deny the insinuation, for up to my fifteenth year I was not yet sufficiently mentally developed to be anything fervently; and after that time, when my bud commenced to open itself a little, bibles, and prayer-books, and catechisms were scarcely my favourite literature, and before my seventeenth year I had arrived at the conclusion—a conclusion which I still adhere to in the fiftieth year of my life, that God could not have revealed all his powers and spiritual secrets to a sacerdotal caste of Egyptian, Christian, Mahomedan, or Hindoo priests, popes, or parsons. God's beautiful world, with its deep mysteries, I thought, were laid open before my mind as fully as before the minds of privileged tithe-gatherers. My prototype of a religious teacher was always Jesus Christ, but with respect to His followers, I always was of

opinion that their kingdom was palpably and essentially of this world. Jesus I know, and Paul I also may know a little, but popes and priests, and the general run of modern persons I never knew or recognised as His true followers. And in this respect I am sure I am not singular, otherwise the Italians would not now make the representative of God on earth emigrate from Rome to the subarctic latitude of Quebec. The world at large, including my little self, is now, and has been these many years looking forward to the advent of a new Christ, and the world has ample reason for waiting for an improvement in the immediate future in matters religious, at a time when both shallow and deep thinkers ask *und voce* the momentous question: "Are we still Christians?" But enough of this; the above question, I am certain, will shortly be answered by an emphatic *No!* And I, for one, am content to wait patiently for the result of this negation, knowing that what follows must be an amelioration of our Christian antecedents.

As to Rev. Joseph Cook's attempts to bolster up the divine descent of Jesus Christ by quotations, or rather, misquotations, from Huxley's works, I am inclined to think that that Professor of infidelity and materialism would form a poor forerunner of any Messiah, Christian or other, but especially of one who was born without the aid of a father by a pure virgin.

To corroborate my views in connection with this part of my subject, namely, the pious fraud perpetrated by the Rev. Joseph Cook in favour of his theory of a divine Parthenogenesis, including human beings, I shall conclude my letter with quoting a passage from a pamphlet by John Fiske, entitled, "The Rev. Joseph Cook: a Critique," and I trust, after its perusal, my friend, the Disciple of Nature, will take a more natural view of the reverend Monday lecturer's theory about the virginal descent of Jesus Christ. Here are the words of Fiske:

"Mr. Cook's system of quotation is peculiar. The following instance is so good that it will bear citing at some length. According to Rev. J. Cook, Professor Huxley says, in his article on Biology, in the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*—

"Throughout almost the whole series of living beings, we find agamogenesis, or non-sexual generation. After a pause, Mr. Cook proceeded in a lower voice: When the topic of the origin of the life of our Lord on the earth is approached from the point of view of the microscope, some men, who know not what the holy of holies in physical and religious science is, say that we have no example of the origin of life without two parents. Mr. Cook then cites the familiar instances of parthenogenesis in bees and silk-moths, and proceeds: 'Take up your Mivart, your Lyall, your Owen, and you will read [where?] this same important fact which Huxley here asserts, when he says that the law that perfect individuals may be virginally born extends to the higher forms of life. I am in the presence of Almighty God; and yet, when a great soul like the tender spirit of our sainted Lincoln, in his early days, with little knowledge but with great thoughtfulness was troubled by this difficulty, and almost thrown into infidelity by not knowing that the law that there must be two parents is not universal, I am willing to allude, even in such a presence as this, to the latest science concerning miraculous conception. [Sensation.]' Concerning the good taste, or the orthodox propriety, of 'approaching the origin of the life of our Lord on earth from the point of view of the microscope,' something might be said were there need of it. The rhetorical vulgarity of the above passage will be as obvious to most of our readers as its logical absurdity. All that I am now concerned with, however, is its unscrupulous misstatement. Let us look back for a moment at the italicised quotation from Prof. Huxley's article and see what he really does say. Treating of the whole subject of agamogenesis in the widest possible way by including it under the more general process of cell-multiplication, Professor Huxley says: 'Common as the process is in plants and in the lower animals, it becomes rare among the higher animals. In these the reproduction of the whole organism from a part, in the way indicated above, ceases. At most we find that the cells at the end of an amputated portion of the organism are capable of reproducing the lost part, and in the very highest animals, even this power vanishes in the adult. . . . Throughout almost the whole

series of living beings, however, we find concurrently with the process of agamogenesis, or non-sexual generation, another method of generation, in which the development of the germ into an organism resembling the parent depends on an influence exerted by living matter different from the germ. This is gamogenesis, or sexual generation. (*Encyc. Brit.*, 9th edition, 'Biology,' page 686.) Comparing the italicised passage here with Mr. Cook's italicised quotation, we see vividly illustrated the 'fundamental method of procedure' by which the 'Monday lectureship' jumps from a statement about the reproduction of a lobster's claws to the inference that a man may be born without a father. Every one has heard of the worthy clergyman who introduced a scathing sermon on a new-fangled variety of ladies' head-dress by the appropriate text, 'Top-knot come down!' On being reminded by one of his deacons that the full verse seemed to read, 'Let him that is upon the house-top not come down,' the pastor boldly justified his abridgment on the ground that any particular collocation of words in Scripture is as authoritative as any other, since all parts of the Bible are equally inspired. Probably Mr. Cook would justify his own peculiar principle of abridgment on the ground that the end sanctifies the means, and that if a statement seems helpful to 'the truth' in general, it is no matter whether the statement itself is true or not."

#### CHRONICLES OF SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHY.\*

SINCE the retirement from public life of Mr. Munier and J. J. Hartmann, both celebrated mediums for the production of spirit photographs, very little has been heard of this interesting phase of mediumship; whilst the assertions of fraud in the case of Mr. Hudson, of London, and the proof of it in connection with Buguet, of Paris, has left a widespread impression, not only on the minds of the public at large, but on those of many new investigators and believers in spirit phenomena, that spirit photography, if not a fraud, was at best undemonstrated as a fact. Those, however, who studied the evidences given through the two first-named mediums, are cognisant that the fact was demonstrated by an array of the most positive evidence given under the strictest test conditions, and complying with the demands of the most determined sceptics, Hartmann having surrendered himself to a number of professionals, who used their own gallery, instruments, plates, and chemicals, and under these stringent conditions, succeeded in obtaining a second form on the plate.

The book under notice revives the subject, and brings before the public an array of evidence of the fact that spiritual beings can, in the presence of suitable media, cast their shadows upon the sensitised plate with sufficient distinctness to be clearly recognised by their friends and relatives still in the material form.

Miss Houghton's experiences in this branch of spirit phenomena extended over a lengthy period, the medium being Mr. Hudson, of London, and whatever suspicions may have been cast upon his later productions by those prejudiced against him, there can be no doubt on the mind of any impartial reader of Miss Houghton's book that in the many cases referred to, fraud was out of the question, as setting aside the careful supervision of the process, often by experts, unmistakable likenesses of deceased friends, of whom no picture was extant, were produced. Among those who testify to this fact are Messrs. Beattie and Slater, experts; William Howitt, Dr. Sexton, A. R. Wallace, F. E. S., Dr. Cargill, and M. A. (Oxon.)

Miss Houghton's book is illustrated with 54 copies of spirit photos. In her possession, the records relating to which are clear and demonstrative, forming an important link in the long chain of proofs of spirit communion with mortals. The volume is handsomely finished, and the copies of the photographs in Albertype are excellent.

\* *Chronicles of the Photographs of Spiritual Beings, and Phenomena, Invisable to the Natural Eye*; by Miss Houghton. Allen, London. 1882.



## CAN IT BE?

A STORY OF THE DAY.

BY E. CYRIL HAVILAND.

(Continued.)

## CHAPTER VI.

Early next morning, I got up and dressed, for I was really too excited to remain quiet, and in spite of previous resolutions, said I would stroll over to Bronton's house and see if they were up.

Arrived there, I found Bronton in the garden looking after his plants, and doing a little weeding.

"Why, Tom, what on earth fetches you over so early?" He exclaimed.

"I was too restless to stay in bed and so, came over for an early stroll," I replied, complimenting myself silently on my assumed coolness.

I was turning over in my mind, how to commence when he began again.

"We got a letter from Lily, yesterday; she seems in splendid spirits and says her health has vastly improved. But in nearly every letter she asks, 'Have we seen Jamieson?' And she has told her Uncle Stanthorpe what a quiet gentlemanly man he is, and so on. One would almost think she was in love with him."

"Oh, he is a nice, taking fellow with the ladies especially. He was over at my place last night, and Kingsbury and Scrag were there too."

"Well and how did it end? Did the exposé and the medium become sworn foes, or friends?"

"To tell you the truth Bronton, it ended very seriously—"

"Why," says Jack, interrupting me and with a bundle of weeds in mid-air, "Why, did they come to that? Fists, I suppose? I did not think Jamieson had it in him—Who won? How did it end?"

"Now, Jack, be serious for a moment, because it affects you and yours. There was no fight, but we had a very warm discussion and in the middle of it, Jamieson was suddenly controlled—"

"Oh, that was a mean way of getting out of the argument," said Jack, again interrupting, "But why are you getting so excited?"

"Jack be quiet, for I am trying to prepare you for very bad news indeed—"

"What, has that rascal married her on the quiet?"

"No, do for Heaven's sake be still. I believe Lily has had an accident." I blurt out, for he has made me angry and I cannot stand any more interruptions—

"What? Lily.—How, tell me quick, how did you hear it?" He stammers out, getting up from his knees and letting the weeding fork drop—

"We were sitting last night and a spirit came—"

"Now Tom, why do you come and frighten me with an assertion like that, got through those cursed frauds. How sensible men like you can be so easily hoodwinked I can't say—Go on, tell me all about it, but don't mind my laughing at it," says Jack, dropping down again to his old position and beginning once more to weed the bed.

"I am glad you take it so quietly, for I confess it has prevented my sleeping all night, but as it apparently does not disturb you, I will tell you all about it, and I can only hope that Koorawani is telling a lie," I answer.

And so I repeated to Jack all the events of the evening, at the end of which recital, he looked up and said,

"Now, look here, Tom.—If you were not so blinded by your persistent and obstinate belief, you would see through this at once. Don't you see that Jamieson, the scoundrel, was afraid of Scrag getting the best of him and so he invented this to break up the evening? I've half a mind to go in and thrash him for daring to utter my daughter's name in connection with so barefaced a swindle—"

"Well, Jack, I've eased my mind by telling you and now I'll be off home to breakfast."

"No, don't go, stay here to breakfast and excuse my warmth, but under the circumstances I could not restrain myself," Jack urged.

But I had made up my mind to go and of course, I went, for I could not stay and hear Lily's father so calmly jeering at an incident that might yet prove true.

It has always been a source of wonder to me, that well educated and clever men,—Men indeed, who are immensely higher in the scientific fields than I am, can so calmly deny the existence of anything of which they know nothing. One would suppose that the more a man of science knew, the less he would talk of that he knew nothing of. It makes me feel that I could almost, by a course of reasoning prove that the more we know, the less we know; but the fact is that a specialist will deny everything that goes, or seems to go, against his hobby. To his mind it cannot be and therefore is not. But let us have no "meandering" as Mrs. Partington says. To return then to myself.

I left Brontonville and returned home to breakfast and told my wife of all that had passed and after breakfast I went into Sydney to see how Jamieson was getting on and to look after a few other business items. When I reached Jamieson's house, I found him in bed and not at all well.

"This will never do Jamieson—Cheer up old fellow. I dare say it came with a shock to you, suddenly coming out of a trance last night, but we have no confirmation yet of the news." I say, trying to rouse him.

"Ah Tom, if you only knew how I love that girl. I cannot help it, but ever since I first saw her she has haunted me. She seemed so quiet and so lady-like and good, and now— My God, it is too hard," and Jamieson buried his face in his pillow, to hide his tears.

"But you know, Charlie, sometimes these spirits tell lies and—"

"I know, but not this time. Koorawani showed me all last night. And I had hoped that—but there, never mind,—don't tell anyone, what I have told you. Promise me that."

"I promise you," I replied. "But what are you going to do, you will get ill if this goes on. Come out to my house in the country for a day or two and you will soon be all right."

"I wish I could go somewhere, for a day's quiet," He says.

"Well, do that. You get up and I will drive in this afternoon and the drive out will rouse you up. Now be ready for me, I will be here at 3 o'clock. Hallo, who's that?" I ask as a knock comes to the door.

I open the door and the servant presents a card, with "Joseph Kingsbury, and Dr. Scrag" written on it in pencil. I take out one of my own cards and write on it "Joe, come up, I want you," and in return up comes Joseph alone, having left Scrag down below.

"Look here, Joe, you've come for a sitting, I presume," I ask.

"Yea."

"Well, send Scrag away, Jamieson is too ill to see him."

"But how can I?" Says Joe quietly to me. "Don't you see he will think it is only an excuse and will tell everyone that Jamieson is afraid to meet him."

"We must chance that," I reply.

"No, send him up here," says a very authoritative voice, and I immediately notice Jamieson is under control. "Send him up here at once. The medium is far from well, but he shall not have it in his power to tell people, he did not see him, every time he calls. I will talk to him."

So Dr. Scrag was brought upstairs into the bedroom, and after he shook hands with me he turned to Jamieson and said in a voice, I had already begun to detest. "Good morning, Mr Jamieson."

"Good morning Sir," replied the control who was unknown to me. "I have taken possession of the medium who, is not at all well and therefore cannot spare much time for talk, so at once, I will enter on what I am going to say."

I gave Dr. Scrag a chair and the control proceeded, "You, in your wisdom, think this medium is acting and is conscious of all he says in this state. You belong to

that sceptical clever school, who believe nothing you know nothing of and so far you are right, but when you go further and assert that certain things do not exist, which other men equally clever assert do exist, you make yourself contemptibly mean and debase the noble qualities of reason, with which an infinite spirit has gifted you. You are too dogmatic in your denial and before many days have passed you will repent the publicity, which you have given to your ignorant assertions. Last night Koorawani the Indian stated the truth, Lily Brontë is dead, her spirit has left its body, but when the telegraph confirms the fact, you and others like you, will put it down to coincidence."

"Excuse me Sir," said Scragg, "Mr Jamieson or not, but I did not come here to be lectured, I came to see some more of the phenomena, as it is called, that occur through this medium."

"This medium, will not satisfy your curiosity this morning so far. But I will tell you, how you did that clever trick that you designated 'slate writing,' and as you and your accomplice are both here, it is a good opportunity."

"Very well, I am listening," Scragg replied.

"Why the secret lies in that you changed the slates by sleight of hand for two on which were already written the answers to twelve questions that you had up your sleeve and when you got the hat full of questions, you did not draw one out of it, but only used it as a screen to hide your sleeve, and then your accomplice called out 'make it a dozen,' as had been previously arranged by you."

"So you think that explains it," Scragg asks.

"I don't think at all, I know, for I saw it."

"Oh, very well and as I can't get a sitting, I had better go, but I think I ought to get sittings when I come but I suppose the medium has not got his accomplices ready yet," said Scragg, taking up his hat and going. "Are you coming, Kingsbury?"

"Directly, goodbye Hawk, I'll see you again. Goodbye Mr. —."

"Goodbye, Sir, never mind my name," said the control, as Kingsbury followed Scragg out, and down stairs. Then turning to me the control continued. "Do not tell the medium when he comes back that they were here, it would only worry him. Tell him, I say he had better go to your house and stay a week and it will do him good. Goodbye, at some future time, we will be better acquainted."

After a short time Jamieson came back again to himself and I gave him the latter part of the message, and of the first, he apparently knew nothing.

So I left him promising to back with the buggy by 3 o'clock that afternoon.

On reaching home the first thing I received was a letter from Brontë, or rather I should say a short note, saying he had just received a telegram from Mr. Stanthorpe that Lily had met with a severe accident and Brontë further said that he and his wife were off at once to Queensland by the steamer sailing that afternoon at 1 p.m.

It was just after 1 o'clock, when I got home so it was no use going to Brontëville, but I thought if I hurried back with the buggy, I might see him on the steamer before she started, as I knew they often delayed boats for an hour or more after advertised time.

I ordered the horse to be put in at once and taking a hasty lunch started again for Sydney and drove down to the A. S. N. wharf where the steamer was to start from, but I was too late, for they had gone rather punctually.

However, I went back for Jamieson and found him waiting for me, and we took a drive round first before starting on the straight road home. I did this because, I thought the change of scene would tend to enliven Jamieson, who had been too much by himself in his sorrowful thoughts of the past twenty-four hours.

I had told him all about Brontë's going away and the telegram of the accident, but he said that Lily's uncle was only breaking it to them easily and that they would find she had been killed as before told.

There would be no use in my detailing the first evening at my house, for we had no manifestations and there was nothing transpired in connection with this record.

A general air of depression seemed to pervade the whole of us, which could not be shaken off, and it was not until the next evening that matters seemed to mend a little.

Jamieson and Mary Langton were sitting on the verandah in the twilight, when he suddenly said, "Look, look, there she is, there is Lily."

"Where?" said Mary, "I don't see her."

"She is standing there on the lawn and she looks so happy, she seems to want to write something. Yes, she nods her head. Will you write now? No—she says 'no.' When? To-night? She says 'yes.' Very well, we will sit." So about half past seven, we four, that is Jamieson, Mary, my wife and myself, sat down for a seance.

A clean slate lay on the table, with a grain of pencil on it and presently we heard scratching on the slate; when it ceased, Jamieson turned it over and read.

"Lily Brontë says she is very happy now, and she could be happier still if the medium, whom she truly loves, did not grieve so much. He should know better for the grief of those who have not the knowledge of spirit-life that he has, is easier for a spirit to bear, than the grief of those who do know. Lily Brontë does not write this herself, because she does not yet quite understand the conditions of this life, but I am writing it by her dictation. She wishes the medium to know that in spirit she loves him, and will be always with him and hopes he will now try and be happy again in that thought—Goodbye." Jamieson asked me to let him keep that slate and of course I did.

We got no further manifestations that sitting, in fact, Jamieson felt disinclined to sit any more, and went off to his room, saying he was tired and head-aching, but it is my impression, he wanted to be alone to study over the slate which he carefully took with him.

Next day we had decided to spend in the mountains, and so when morning broke, we were all anxious to get up and prepare the picnic basket.

We had settled on going to Mount Victoria, a distance of seventy-seven miles from Sydney, and nearly three thousand five hundred feet higher, and as the train left Sydney at nine o'clock and we would not arrive until half-past one, we laid in a stock of sandwiches.

The scenery along the line, was very tame until Penrith was reached, where the traveller gets his first view of the Nepean River and the bridge, over which so much money was spent, in consequence of floods washing it away while in course of construction. Then presently we were on the Lapstone Viaduct and saw Penrith and the river down below us and then the mountainous country we were in completely shut out the view.

Every now and again deep dark gorges and ravines would be exposed and so we passed on, until the first, and smaller Zig-Zag was reached.

This Zig-Zag conveying no idea of the grandeur and scenery surrounding the second and larger one which however, we will not see as it lies further on than Mount Victoria.

Jamieson seemed much brighter and happier to-day, owing, I think, a good deal to his message of the past evening and a good deal to the clear mountain air through which we were passing. He seemed to take more interest in surrounding objects and especially in this Zig-Zag, this being the first time he had seen it.

When we were down below on the bottom rails, I pointed out to him up the steep side of the mountain where we would be presently and as we were first pushed up the gradient and then pulled the reverse way up another, the country opened before us the higher we got, until at last on the top level he was able to see, the lower lines we had just left away below us. Like many others, Jamieson thought that this was the grand Zig-Zag and would hardly believe me when I told him that, that work lay some distance farther on.

But the main object of our trip, the doing Jamieson some good, was a great success and by the time we arrived at the hotel at Mount Victoria, he was in much better spirits.

In the train and during our stay at the hotel, he would apparently try to convince himself, that it really was better so, by arguing the point with me, and by stating

that he would himself much rather be free from the world and its cares.

That evening we stayed at Mount Victoria, returning next day to Sydney, by the early morning train.

I had been for a long time desirous of making experiments in Spiritualism, such as trying to get spirit-photographs &c., and Jamieson and I had been talking over the probability of success during our trip and we arranged to go further into the matter on our return.

(To be Continued.)

## THE BEGINNING AND THE END OF THE WORLDS.

BY CAMILLE FLAMMARION.

*Continued.*

II.

### THE END.

We all admire to-day the beauties of terrestrial nature: the verdant hills and the sweet-scented meadows, the purling streams, the mysterious shadows, the woods animated by the voices of singing birds, the mountains covered with glaciers, the boundless seas, the warm tints of the sun setting in clouds bordered with gold and scarlet, and the sublime shining glory of the majestic orb rising over the summits of mountains, when the first morning rays roll up into a scroll the grey mists of the wide plains.

We admire the works of man, which to-day crown those of nature: the bold viaducts thrown from one mountain to another, upon which our railway carriages run; the ships, those marvellous structures which traverse our oceans in all directions; the brilliant cities animated with life; the palaces and the temples, the libraries—those wonderful museums of mind; the arts of sculpture and painting, which idealise the real; the inspiration of music, which make us forget things vulgar; the labours of the intellectual genius, who penetrates into the mysteries of the worlds, and transports us into infinite space; and we live in the midst of this radiant life of which we ourselves form an integral part. But all this beauty, all these flowers, and all these fruits will pass away.

The earth was born; the earth will die.

It will die either from old age, when its vital elements have become exhausted; or in consequence of the extinction of the sun, by whose rays its life is suspended. The earth may also come to grief by an accident, by the shock of a celestial body which might meet it whilst traversing its course; but the last-mentioned end of the world is the most improbable of all contingencies.

The earth might, we said, die a natural death, through the slow and gradual absorption and consumption of its own vital elements. It is indeed probable that air and water are diminishing. The sea and the atmosphere appear to have been formerly much more considerable than in our days. The crust of the earth is penetrated by the water which enters into chemical combinations with the rocks. It is almost certain that the temperature of the interior of the globe equals that of boiling water at a depth of ten kilometers, and prevents the water from descending lower; but this absorption will continue and progress with the progressive refrigeration of the globe. The oxygen, the nitrogen, and the carbonic acid gas, which constitute our atmosphere, appear also to undergo a slow process of diminution. The thinker can foresee, across the winter of future centuries, the still very distant epoch when the earth, deprived of the vapour of atmospheric water, which protects her against the icy cold of space by concentrating round her the solar rays, like in the glass dome of a hot-house, will stiffen in the cold sleep of death. From the summit of the mountains will descend the glacial death-shroud of the snows upon the high plateaus and the deep valleys, chasing before it life and civilisation, and covering up its path. Life and human activity will gradually retire towards the intertropical region on both sides of the equator. St. Petersburg, Berlin, London, Paris, Vienna, Constantinople, and Rome will successively fall asleep,

covered by the eternal veil of death. During many centuries, equatorial humanity will vainly undertake Arctic expeditions to re-discover the ancient sites of Paris, of Lyons, of Bordeaux, and of Marseilles. The borders of the seas will have become changed, and the map of the earth will be transformed completely. Life and respiration will only be possible in the equatorial zone, until the day at last arrives when the last human family will sit down to its last meal, already half dead with cold and hunger, at the shore of the last sea, in the rays of a sun which henceforth will only shine down upon a revolving tomb, turning itself madly round a useless source of light and a barren hearth of heat.

It seems that our neighbour, the moon, younger than the earth, because she is her daughter, but also frailer and feebler, has already lost the greatest part of her liquids and gases; for the innumerable craters which cover her face with their open throats were only able to vomit forth their burnt-up bowels in the midst of the spasmodic tortures which agitated her at a time when the lunar atmosphere was incomparably more dense than to-day.

Perhaps, we have already commenced ourselves to assist, without a doubt, at the death-struggle of the last tribes of the human race, helping them to fight against the invasion of cold and death. Ah! could these neighbours of the heavens only speak to us telegraphically, and tell us the story of their career!

The planet Mars, preceding the Earth in its birth, is smaller than it, and appears also more advanced than our globe, for its oceans do not occupy, like ours, three-fourth of the globe. Martial humanity, without a doubt, has already attained its highest development, whereas we terrestrials have barely escaped from a state of infancy and barbarism.

But, perhaps, our earth will live sufficiently long not to die before the extinction of the sun. Our destiny would always be the same; it would, in truth, always be death by cold; but this death would be put off to a more distant period of time, and its decay and dissolution would only be protracted. In the first case, nature has certainly a few millions of years still in store for us; in the second instance, we should be compelled to reckon our end by millions of centuries. Mankind will, both physically and morally, be transformed long before it arrives at its apogee, a long time before its decadence.

The sun will be extinguished. He is certainly losing a portion of his heat; for the energy which he expends by radiation surpasses all imagination. The heat emitted by the sun every hour would convert into boiling water 2,900 million myriameter cubes of ice. Almost the whole of this heat is lost in space. The quantity of heat arrested by the planets in its passage and utilised for their vital purposes is insignificant in relation to the quantity lost. We could, for instance, calculate the fraction of that heat which our earth receives; but this is not necessary for our present purpose, and it will suffice to state that the heat lost in the immensity of space in relation to the heat absorbed by the earth, is something like 2,300,000,000 to 1. All the planets of our solar system put together absorb only an infinitesimal portion of this immense radiation.

If the sun condenses itself already now with a rapidity sufficient to compensate for such a loss, or if the meteoric showers which incessantly fall upon its surface are adequate to make up for the difference, then the sun has not yet begun to cool; but if the contrary is the case, then the sun has already commenced its process of refrigeration. And this latter position is the most probable, for the spots which cover the face of the sun periodically cannot be considered as anything else but manifestations of such a cooling process. The day will come when these sun-spots will be far more numerous than they are to-day, and when they will begin to cover a more considerable portion of the surface of the solar globe. From century to century the process of obscuration will gradually increase, but it will not proceed in a regular manner, because the first fragments of the crust which will cover the incandescent liquid surface will again be broken up, but only to be replaced by similar new formations.

Future centuries will see the sun become extinguished and relighted several times, until the still far distant day will at last arrive when final and definite refrigeration will affect the whole surface of our globe, and when the last intermittent and dim rays of the sun will disappear for ever, and when the enormous red ball of fire will become dull, never more to delight nature with the sweet boon of its light. This will be the end of times once sung upon the lofty lyre of the singer of Rolla:

"The nothing! the nothing! see'st thou its shadow immense,  
Which steals upon the sun rolling on its axis of fire?  
The shadow gains ground and extends: eternity does commence."

Already have we seen twenty-five stars twinkle with a spasmodic light, and again fall back into a deathly darkness approaching extinction; already have brilliant stars, saluted by the eyes of our fathers, disappeared from our celestial maps. The sun is only a star; he will undergo the same fate as his defunct companions; the suns, like the worlds, are born only to die, and he also in his long career will thus have lived the short space of a morning in the eternity of time. Then, the sun, now a dark star, but still filled with the elements of heat, pervaded by electric currents, and dimly lighted by the undulating shimmer of a magnetic aurora, will have become an immense world, inhabited by strange beings. Around him will still continue to revolve the planetary toms, until the day arrives when the whole solar commonwealth will be struck out from the book of life and disappear, in order to make room for other nascent systems of worlds, to other suns, to other earths, to other races of men, to other souls—our successors in the universal and eternal history of God's creations.

*To be continued.*

#### A SPIRITUALIST ON THE MARRIAGE RELATION.

We extract the following address by S. B. Brittan from an account of the marriage ceremony of Dr. J. Rodas Buchanan and Mrs. Decker, which appears in the *Banner of Light*, Dec. 24th last:—

It has often been more than intimated that Spiritualists, as a class, do not attach any sacred significance to the marriage relation; that they are prone to disregard its legal restraints and to dishonour its moral obligations. If this be true in its application to any considerable number of professed Spiritualists, it is doubtless owing to the grave defects in their early religious education. *The Christian Church regards marriage as only an earthly institution*, having its chief or entire relation to the physical life and sensuous nature of human beings. Its highest conception of the objects and uses of marriage appears to be the orderly and legitimate reproduction of the species. By the express terms of the Church ceremony the relation is limited to the co-ordinate life of the parties on the physical plane of their existence. The language which defines and enforces their reciprocal duties and obligations, pledges them only for the life in this world. Its terms are, "*So long as you both shall live*," and "the twain shall be one flesh." People who are accustomed to reason on social questions from essential principles can hardly be expected to entertain a very high esteem for this low conception or idea, which has the sanction of ecclesiastical authority while it bears the image of its earthly and sensual origin.

It is the high office of a rational Spiritualism to teach mankind a purer and nobler lesson. It is here we learn the sublime truth that *marriage in the highest sense is the union of two souls in harmony with the divine laws of our spiritual being*. Wherever such an alliance exists, here or hereafter, in this world or any other,

"Heaven smiles upon this fair conjunction."

In the nature of things the true union of two loving spirits is not merely for time. On the contrary, this relation in its higher character and claims lays hold of all the faculties and affections of our spiritual constitution, and the imperishable realities of the immortal life. Marriage in this most exalted sense may indeed be of very rare occurrence in this world; but our sublime philo-

sophy at least should lead us to contemplate it among the grand possibilities of the beautiful Hereafter. The enlightened Spiritualist knows that

"Death is not the end of love;  
True love cannot die;  
Earthly loves are but reflections,  
Yet they weave us sweet connections  
With the new and pure affections  
Of the sky."

As philosophical Spiritualists we need scarcely to modify the strong language of a Christian Apostle to express our profound conviction, for we are assured that "Neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God" as revealed in kindred souls. Where, then, is the warrant for arbitrarily limiting this most sacred relation to the brief period of our mortal existence?

"Can ye sever the twain who to Oneness go?

The voice of Divinity answers, 'No!'"

But whether our ideas of marriage be high or low, sensual or spiritual, the institution itself with its legal obligations doubtless exists for wise and beneficent purposes, and it is declared to be honourable among all civilised nations. And now, my esteemed friends, assured that you have made it a subject of due deliberation, and have carefully considered the duties and obligations which are inseparable from the nature of this relation, you will please take and receive each other by the right hand.

DR. JOSEPH RODES BUCHANAN, you receive this woman whom you hold by her right hand, to be your lawful wife, and as such you will love, cherish, and support her, and perform toward her all the duties of a kind, faithful, and affectionate husband so long as your fortunes shall be united in this sacred relation.

MRS. CORNELIA HUMPHREY DECKER, you receive our respected friend, whom you now hold by the hand, to be your lawful husband, and as such you will love, cherish, and honour him, and perform toward him all the duties of a kind, faithful, and affectionate wife so long as the endearing relation we now solemnise shall exist between you. Do you thus mutually promise?

Answer—Yes.

Forasmuch as you have pledged your fidelity each to the other, in presence of these witnesses, therefore, by virtue of the privilege conferred on me by the statute in such cases made and provided, I hereby declare you to be lawfully married. And may this external union and legal bond prove to be expressive symbols of that inward and more spiritual union which consists in mutual sympathies, in kindred aspirations, and in a common destiny with the inheritance of all loving affections which, let us devoutly pray, may make your hearts and lives responsive as two cords in one lyre.

#### THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

THE sixth anniversary of the above Society was held at the Framji Cowasji Institute, Bombay, on the 12th January last, on which occasion the building was crowded by an enthusiastic audience. Dr. Pandurang Gopal being voted to the chair made a few introductory remarks on the good work the Society was doing among people of all castes, and called upon the Secretary to read the report and balance-sheet for the last year; from the latter of which it appeared that upwards of 4000 rupees had been advanced by Madame Blavatsky and Col. Olcott during that period.

The President, Col. Olcott, gave a long and interesting address, reviewing the work of the past year, and illustrating the growing influence of the Society in the advancement of Rationalism and the resuscitation of primitive Buddhism. Several other speakers followed. Mr. K. M. Shroff's concluding speech terminating with a grand burst of applause from the audience.

THE daughter of the late William Howitt writes to *Light*, denying that there is any foundation for the statement occasionally made that her father, before his departure, renounced Spiritualism.



## MATERIALIZATION SEANCES.

At the conclusion of the experimental sittings with Mr Spriggs, the results of which were given in our last issue, the mediumistic force appeared to have become temporarily somewhat exhausted, owing to its increased expenditure over the experiments, and at the two or three sittings immediately following, the manifestations were not vigorous, and presented no features other than those with which our readers are already familiar. The power, however, rapidly increased until it attained its usual pitch, and ultimately even surpassed it, and during the remainder of the past month's sittings some new and important developments have, as will be seen, been presented.

Peter has from time to time conversed with great freedom and distinctness, and it is due, both to him and to our readers to embody a few of his remarks on various subjects in this report. Being questioned as to the introduction of material objects into closed apartments, he said that matter was not solid as it is commonly thought to be. In manifestations of that kind, the spirit would, so to speak "liquify" the substance he wished to bring in, or would cause a current of force to penetrate the spot at which the substance was to be brought in; this current is exceedingly powerful and being concentrated in the one place, it would render the matter at the point temporarily plastic, so that a material object could be there introduced into the room. When material objects were removed out of a closed room, it was in that way, or at other times, when an object disappeared, it might still be in the room, but the material atoms having been for the time drawn from it, it would be invisible, until restored to its former condition. It was the same also with the introduction of birds or other living beings into rooms under similar conditions. One of the sitters referred to a statement by Madame Blavatsky in "Isis Unveiled" that living organised substance could not be so introduced. Peter replied that known facts were stronger than theoretical assertions. With regard to mediums being carried long distances, that was quite possible, and all by natural laws. It was not to say that spirits were bearing the medium along with their hands through the atmosphere, but it was that the law of attraction downward was for the time counteracted, the attraction was removed from around them, and centralised above them, and they would be at once drawn up to it. As to their being withdrawn from or introduced into closed rooms, the same force was applied as in the case of a small object, and with the same results. If a bird or a small animal could be brought in, so could something on a larger scale. Referring to the results of the recent weighing experiments, and the law which seemed to be indicated that the materialised form continually parted with its substance, as shewn by the continuous diminution in weight, Peter said that similar results had been found elsewhere, but a hard and fast rule could not be made, because through one medium certain things might occur, while through another medium other laws would be brought into operation, and the phenomena occur in a different manner. As mediums were many in number, so manifestations were in many varieties. In the experience of Archdeacon Colley and others, the form had remained with them in the light for a long time. In some cases, unless the controls had made special preparation, it would not do for them to disappear without a subdued light, because the medium is likely to be injured if the force too rapidly returns to him. On the subject of spiritual planets, he said that there were spiritual planets around other inhabited globes, just the same as the spirit-world is around this earth, because the same laws of the universe operate there as here; the condition of the spiritual planet was high or low, according to the development and condition of the inhabited globe. In reference to the powers of the embodied spirit, he said that no doubt there were great powers in man which require developing, and that if people would give as much attention to that subject as spirits do before they come to the circle, they would be able to do more. Speaking upon mediumship, Peter observed that Spiritualists should be careful in selecting mediums for

development, to see that they get the right kind. He appeared not to think it wise that mediumship should be developed in every case where it is possessed. Spiritualists had often made mistakes on this point. Having found a medium, they think they must develop them for the benefit of the world, and do not consider also their organisation, and whether they are fitted in other respects. This carelessness resulted sometimes in bringing discredit upon the Cause.

Considerable progress has been made by both Georgie and John Wright in their ability to endure,—more frequently during an evening, and for longer periods of time,—the full light. This is a highly gratifying and encouraging fact, because the active, muscular form of the one, with his close, dark, heavy beard, affords so complete a contrast to the more slenderly built form of the other, with his thinner, wavy, grey beard, and dignified demeanor. Georgie's success in this direction has been particularly marked. On three occasions he has shewn himself in the full glare of the light, which was taken right out of the recess it usually occupies, and held in Mr Terry's hand in the room, so as to strike directly upon the form, and on one of these occasions Georgie came fairly into the circle, and shook hands with Mr Carson, the light being so good as to permit of the ruddy healthful hue of the countenance,—such as that of those much exposed to sunshine and air,—being distinctly seen, contrasting in this respect with the paler and more lifeless appearance it has sometimes presented, when the power has not been so strong. Still more encouraging is the fact that the controls are accustoming the medium to the endurance, when entranced, of increased light. Georgie pulled the curtain aside to shew him, while the light was in Mr Terry's hand, as above mentioned.

On the 14th ult., six different forms materialised, and five different *handwritings* were obtained. "The Nun" motioned for the writing desk to be brought nearer, and taking up the pencil wrote a few lines on the paper provided. On submitting this to inspection on the spot, the writing was found to be so minute as to necessitate the use of a hand magnifying glass before it could be read. While this was being procured, she again presented herself, and wrote on a second piece of paper what transpired to be the same sentences. On this second occasion the writing, though small, was neat and legible. The following is a copy of what was written:—

"Tu ei hic sis.

Di natura trion fo a te consacro. Atua scorta affido o primo o sommo. Di natura minastro eterno amore."

(Two or three of the letters may possibly be mis-read.)

"Dear friends. It is with pleasure I am able to be with you to night. May God bless your labours.

The Nun. †"

The tall figure of Zion was next visible. He stood at the writing desk, and being apparently in a jocular humor, wrote "Zion Strupp—his mark X," in a large bold hand.

Georgie, who followed Zion, wrote as follows, in a bold masculine hand:—"I have been asked to write a few lines to you. Georgie."

After walking about a little, and distributing some flowers, he in turn retired, and was followed by Mrs Cobham, who, walked to the writing-desk, and wrote twice the following message, referring to the absence of a member of the Circle:—

"I am very sorry our dear friend is not with us to-night,—Maud Cobham."

This hand writing was clear, medium in size, and of a thin and flowing character.

The last message of the evening was written by John Wright, and was as follows:—

"I am unable to stay long to-night. John Wright."

The handwriting was masculine and compact, though delicate, and inclined slightly backwards.

The manifestations on the 17th were exceptionally good, and gave promise of development in new and most important directions. Peter conversed for a time, and Georgie then came into the circle with great freedom. He requested the light to be brought out from the recess, and repeatedly stood in its full glare. Zion, in his turn, also came out powerfully, shaking hands with

several of the sitters so vigorously as to cause them to remember it for some time afterwards. Mrs Cobham also, paid her usual visit. "Charity" remained with the circle longer than usual, and exhibited great vigor. She danced gracefully to music, posing beautifully now and again. Having placed a heavy wooden chair in front of her, she motioned one of the sitters to occupy it. She then took hold of the back and lifted both chair and occupant fairly off the floor, at the same time moving them forward about a foot. She repeated this with another sitter immediately afterwards, with perfect ease. Great strength and agility seem to be combined in her slender form.

On this evening the extraordinary phenomenon of de-materialisation *in the light* took place, for the first time in the experience of the present circle, in the person of John Wright, who in due order presented himself, and stood for a short time just between the curtains. After a while, the form was observed to be slowly sinking downwards, as though through the ground. This continued until the head and shoulders alone were visible, there being some eighteen inches or two feet distance between the top of the head and the ground, when they disappeared behind the curtain. In a minute or two the curtains again opened, and the form of the child Lily was visible. This phase of the manifestations will no doubt, judging from the course which earlier phases have taken, become—relatively speaking—perfected during the series of sittings now commencing. The same may be said in regard to another phase occurring for the first time in the experience of the present circle on the same evening, which consisted in the materialisation of two distinct forms at one and the same time. First, the form of a female, unfamiliar to the circle, materialised, and stood plainly between the curtains for a short time. She then retired, but immediately afterwards the curtains were pushed aside at both the centre and the left-hand side. At the side stood the form of the female, while at the centre was visible the form of a child not more than three feet in height. The figures were separated by nearly the whole width of the left curtain (3½ feet). This was repeated several times. Again they shewed themselves, this time *side by side*, forming a striking contrast. The taller form then repeatedly stooped down, and kissed the child quite audibly, afterwards taking it up into her arms.

Both this, and the phenomenon of de-materialisation in the light, was attended with an almost distressing demand upon the mediumistic forces of the sensitives amongst the sitters.

At the sitting held on the evening of the 21st March, when three visitors were present, the manifestations were exceedingly good, but presented no new features. Georgie came with his usual force, shook the visitors by the hand, and in succession raised their hands and laid them upon his forehead. The child Lily spoke with greatly increased distinctness. One of the visitors stated that she recognised the similarity between the arrangement of the fine gauzy costume of "Charity," the Oriental spirit, and the Eastern female costume, with which she was familiar. The upper portion, she stated, was known as the *Ohedda*, the lower portion, as the *soree*. John Wright wrote a short message,—"You have a fine circle to-night." The writing bore most markedly the characteristics of the writing of John Wright on the previous occasion mentioned above.

On March 24th the oppressive and electrical state of the atmosphere caused by the heat, considerably retarded the manifestations, which were below the average. Georgie, however, as usual, succeeded extremely well, and Peter talked for a time, but the other friends were unable to materialise very strongly. Ski was able to give some very good advice to two mediums who were present, in the course of which he stated that if mediums, while sitting in the circle, had regard to the currents of the earth, they would often be more successful in their development and manifestations. Some mediums required to sit with the back to the east, others to the north, others again to the south, according to the conditions surrounding each. By studying these matters, they would be able to place themselves in proper relation to these currents, for a medium sitting in a circle

was a centre of a force, continually taking on and giving it off, and the current working with the manifestations would help to render them successful. When mediums occupied the wrong position in regard to these earth-currents, it frequently rendered them ill and upset in mind and body. It would be well if mediums would say how far this statement is corroborated by their own experiences.

Certain further and different experiments have been initiated by the circle, but as they are not yet perfected, the particulars are postponed.

## MESSAGE DEPARTMENT.

The following Messages are given through the organization of Mr. George Spriggs, by invisible intelligences professing to be the Spirits of human beings who formerly inhabited a physical body in this world. They come spontaneously, while the Medium is in an abnormal state called a "Trance," and are taken down as spoken by an amanuensis. They are published, not alone for their intrinsic interest, but in the hope that some of them will attract the attention of those to whom they are addressed.]

Good morning, Sir,—I have been told that by coming to your place I could speak, and give my experience of spirit life. I could not believe that such a thing was possible, until the friends assisted me this morning, and brought the facts before my notice. It seems as if things were all upside down, and one idea after another keeps crumbling away. I find that all my past life and teaching has become something of the past. It seems hard for one to undo what they have labored for and believed to be truth during earth-life, but such is the case with me. I was surprised beyond measure when my husband spoke to me on my entrance into spirit-life. I hardly thought it was possible for us to recognise each other, much less for us to hold conversation about earth-life. Not only my husband, but my relations, came and asked me to go along with them to their home. This surprised me again, because I was taught that after death we should go to the Holy City, the New Jerusalem. I soon found myself with my husband and friends in a house in a beautiful spot. The atmosphere was bright and balmy, and it seemed as if I could bask in the rays of the sun for ever. I soon found that I required rest, and was obliged to sleep for a time to recuperate the force that had been expended. I feel sure you can hardly believe what I say, unless you have had stronger testimony than mine as to the truthfulness of what I am saying, but such is the case, and my experience. The grounds were arranged in an ornamental and artistic manner. I made inquiries who was the designer of our beautiful home. I soon found it had emanated from the mind of my dear husband. I can assure you, Sir, I was not only surprised but delighted at finding such a pleasant home surrounded by friends, and everything I could desire to make me happy. In place of seeing God personally, I can only see him in his workings in mankind and nature. I was indeed happy, and have been, because it is a home, and my ideal of what a home ought to be. It is heaven to me, because I am surrounded by those I love. It is superior to the one I expected, because I have a great pleasure in making and developing my own happiness and the beauty around me. I can assure you, Sir, although I am disappointed in my earthly ideal of heaven, still I am far more pleased in the happy home and bright abode I have. Dear angels come and visit us, and make me long to be like them, messengers of love and wisdom. I will not take more of your time, but wish you God-speed in your work. My husband,—James, who is with me, desires the same.

GRACE HUNT

(late Eyre Street, Ballarat).

We are in receipt of a volume of poems, entitled "Freedom, Love, and Brotherhood," written by "Progressus," and published by E. W. Allen, of London. There is, however, among them no poem corresponding with the title, which we presume is intended to indicate the general sentiment of the book. The larger poems are intended to illustrate the untenability of Christian dogmas: whilst some of the shorter ones, notably "Lines to the Slumbering," and "A Direct Answer," have a true spiritual ring about them.

## A LYCEUM FUNERAL.

A MEMBER of the Melbourne Progressive Lyceum, attached to the "Fountain Group" Jessie Beatrice Codling, years of age, a daughter of Mr. John Codling, having recently passed on, her fellow-members of the Lyceum attended on the occasion of the interment of her mortal remains in the Melbourne Cemetery, on the 22nd ult.

The children and others forming the various groups, with their leaders, assembled at the Horticultural Hall, and proceeded on foot to Mr. Codling's residence, and accompanied the body to the place of burial, bearing their standards and banners, each being provided with a bunch of flowers. They approached the cemetery singing, and having assembled round the open grave, the choir opened the proceedings with an appropriate hymn. The Conductor of the Lyceum, Mr. Thomas Walker, addressing the friends, said: "It is mournful for those who are left behind that the door of death has opened to pass another to a higher state; but it is not mournful to those who have passed on to this better state, free there from the troubles, the sorrows, and vicissitudes of life. It is to us a painful thing to part with our mortal friends when they pass into a far-off country—when, looking many years ahead we think we shall not see them more, or at least of the long years ere that time shall be. But to those who are nearer and dearer to those who have passed on, it seems more painful to part with one whom we shall not join again until likewise the door of death opens unto us. But then the kindly hand of nature, the gentleness of death, closing the eyes in sleep, or taking the barque of life from the stormy ocean of existence into its haven, in early life has taken our young friend, and instead of our weeping, or being sorrowful, rather should we be glad, for who fears death fears what indeed may be his best friend, for we cannot say what death may be; for aught we know, it is a door that opens to pleasures and to joys which the mind, in its loftiest and most exalted flight, can form no adequate conception. And even though it were a sleep, how calm and peaceful a sleep it is. No horrid dreams, no frightful images haunt such an everlasting slumber, but wrapt in the beneficent earth, shrouded by the flowers of spring, the verdant grass, and the dews of heaven, she who in the sleep of death reposes, is taken to the heart of nature, oblivious hence to care and woe. Hence, indeed, they are not wise who fear death as their foe. As we journey on life's ocean, sooner or later it will be our lot to have the barque of existence stranded; it may be with some of us that we shall glide gently from the storms into the haven of peace; others at the outset of life may be taken and submerged beneath the cares and woes of existence, and pass on to a higher and better state. So it is with those who have gone before; like swallows at the winter season, gone to the land of summer, or like the sun at its setting each day, gone to shine on fairer lands. The angels had need of the loved one; they have taken it home. May we rest satisfied with our labours on earth, till the time comes when we are called to join her.

The mortal casket of the departed spirit we now lower to the earth which gave it.

During the lowering of the coffin enclosing the remains a hymn was sung by the choir, at the termination of which the children came forward and cast flowers into the grave. The brief ceremony was then concluded.

The *Indian Mirror* contains full accounts of slate-writing phenomena through Mr. Eglinton's mediumship. The editor himself contributes an account of a visit, in the course of which he received, on two slates held by himself, a long and circumstantial message from his deceased father, the personal allusions in which, he says, were "correct to the letter." Its columns are the scene of a lively discussion, in the course of which many valuable phenomena are testified to, and Mr. Slade receives an excellent vindication.

## THE PSYCHOLOGICAL REVIEW.

THIS Magazine enters its fourth volume with the January number now before us; and under its present able conductors, promises to establish its reputation as one of the leading journals of rational and scientific Spiritualism. The number under notice contains some personal reminiscences of the late Epes Sargent, gleaned from a correspondence with his friend and co-worker, M.A., (Oxon.), which was continued until near the period of his dissolution. The extracts from his letters are particularly interesting, indicating the nobility of his character, the depth of his thought, and his power of writing on profound subjects with a clearness and simplicity of language rare and exceptional.

Professor Barrett, under the heading of "Another Symposium," continues his "Familiar Talks on Spiritualism," illustrating the irrationality of that scientific incredulity which is so largely exhibited in relation to spiritual phenomena; whilst Mrs. Ann Howitt Watts, in her "Thoughts regarding the Mystical Death," bridges the river which separates the physical and spiritual conditions of life. From the editorial notes and comments we extract the following:—

"Reading between the lines of the history of the movement for the past decade, one can readily perceive the gradual unfolding of more rational modes of investigation, and the consequent placing of our facts upon an increasingly impregnable foundation. Notwithstanding all the assaults to which they have been subjected, and in spite of alleged or real *capos*, the phenomena of Spiritualism rest to-day upon a sounder basis than ever they did before. And this position has been obtained, not by bowing down at the shrine of credulity and superstition—for this has been characteristic of certain phases through which the movement has passed—but by a stern and rigid conformity to the dictates of a sound common-sense. The movement has progressed in exact ratio as it has submitted to the expansion and rectification of many of its early conclusions. Spiritualism, Psychology, call it what you will, if it be what it claims, viz., the science of man as a spirit and a spiritual world, must be content if it has occasionally to retrace its steps. Other sciences have only reached their present pinnacle by a growth step by step taken amidst manifold failures and blunders. The advance has been slow; so is that of all true progress. Physical science has before now had to reconsider its verdicts, and may have to do so again, and there is no reason to suppose that Spiritualism will have proved an exception to the general rule, and have jumped all at once into absolute truth. Spiritualists are now beginning to realise this fact, and at no period has the disposition to look closely into the bases of our faith been more marked than at the present time. That this is so, I look upon as the most hopeful sign with which the New Year opens. So long as Spiritualism is advocated in this spirit, so long as an unflinching honesty of purpose is brought to bear upon its investigation, so long will it gain ground and be acceptable to earnest seekers after truth."

It is the desire of the editor and his coadjutors to make the journal cosmopolitan, and with that view new arrangements have been made for the publication of it in America and Australia, and contributions invited from competent writers in those and other countries. We commend the journal to the intelligent and thoughtful Spiritualists as calculated to advance the cause they have at heart.

## THE TWO WORLDS.

We are in receipt of the first twenty-two numbers of the *Two Worlds* newspaper, published at New York, and are much pleased with its appearance and contents. It is full of excellent matter—evidences of spiritual phenomena and rational religion, is published by Dr. E. Crowell and edited by Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Newton. A report of Judge Dailey's lecture on "Materialization; actual and possible," which appears in last number (February 11th) might be read with profit by some of the doubters, who comment upon the materializations occurring in this city.

### MR. G. M. STEPHEN'S PUBLIC HEALING MEDIUMSHIP.

Mr. G. M. STEPHEN has again been exercising his healing powers before a public audience in Melbourne. On this occasion, at the Horticultural Hall, the Temperance Hall not being obtainable; and on the 1st ult., we attended to watch the result of his operations. About 200 people were present, a large proportion being apparently anticipatory patients.

The first case was a girl who had been treated before by Mr. Stephen for ophthalmia, and reported herself almost cured. The next, a lady who had had a "tear-drop" in her eye, accompanied by considerable pain; the latter was quite removed by Mr. Stephen's manipulations. In several cases of various kinds which followed these, all reported some appreciable change, but nothing of a startling character, the most notable being a man with weak knees, who after the operation walked with comparative freedom. A man who had been "moon-blind" for six years, and been to many doctors without receiving any relief, reported himself better, and complained of peculiar sensations after treatment.

In reference to this case the patient wrote—

"Little Queensberry-street, Carlton.

"March 2nd, 1882.

"To Mr. G. Milner Stephen. Hon. Sir,—I beg of you to accept of my most sincere thanks, and I pray God, by His mighty power, you may do great things. I am most happy to inform you, sir, that I have derived much good from the wonderful power given you yesterday at the Horticultural Hall. For six years I have been unable to follow my occupation. I have a certificate of competency as mate; passed in Glasgow, Nov. 14th, 1870; No. 93,830. For six long years I never lost my faith, believing I would again get my sight, although I have had many things to discourage me. First two doctors at home, in Scotland, failed; and next I tried Dr. Powell, Christ Church, New Zealand; he told me 'twas useless to try any more. I next tried Dr. Gray, and I was under his treatment for over seven months, and at last he also told me 'twas useless for me to try more; and I must admit your one treatment has done me more good than anything I ever tried. I would be but too happy to try and give you some little reward or recompense for what you have done, but I can only say as better men than I am have to say: 'silver and gold have I none'; but I can pray that you may be instrumental in God's hand of doing that which will never perish.

"What I state here is truth; that is great and mighty over all things. With prayers and my most sincere thanks,

"I remain, etc.,

"RICHARD BELL."

The following testimonial, referring to a case treated on the same day, has been handed to us by Mr. Stephen:—

"Mr. G. Milner Stephen.

"Dear Sir,—I have great pleasure in testifying to the great benefit my young sister Florence, a girl of 13 years, has derived by the exertion of your wonderful power upon her. She has been suffering from a cataract on one eye for nearly ten years, and although treated by Melbourne's most skilled doctors (Drs. Gray and Bowen), received no permanent good. She was at last taken to you, almost blind of the eye; and now, with heartfelt gratitude I say it, although not wholly cured, *she is able to read small print with ease*. Deeply sorry for your being called away and grateful for your almost gratuitous, but nevertheless very careful attention. I, with pleasure on behalf of my young sister, testify to the great good you have done for her. Wishing you heaven's sweetest smiles and earth's richest blessings,

"I am, dear sir, yours etc.,

"F. M'OLEAN,

"114 Madeline Street, Carlton.

"March 16th, 1882."

After another succession of moderately successful cases, an elderly man came forward with his left hand paralysed and contracted, caused, he said, by corrosive sublimate, 13 years ago. The effect in this case was remarkable, as after a few passes the hand began visibly to relax, and being lightly frictionised with oil by Mr. S., he was enabled to open and close it with comparative freedom. The poor fellow was overcome with emotion, and not content with invoking God's blessing on Mr. Stephen, blessed everybody who he deemed were connected with him. Any reasonable person witnessing such positive effects as these, whatever may be their theory as to the origin or source of the power that produces them, cannot fail to be convinced of its reality and beneficent tendency.

### TESTS OF SPIRIT IDENTITY.

WE extract the following from a letter recently received from a gentleman resident at Mudgee, N.S.W.:—

"Since my return from Melbourne, Mrs. G.—'s brother and brother-in-law passed to the other side; both came in about ten days after, and announced their presence. We were told by tilts of the table when they left this side—date correctly given—and an assurance that I should have a letter announcing their demise. All came to pass as stated; both died at Liverpool, England."

"In the latter part of '81, while sitting with Mrs. G.—, an old and loving friend of mine, announced his presence; stated where he died. Told me to write to his brother, who resides in Liverpool, England. I wrote as instructed, and received a reply last week confirming the statement. I have held many conversations with him since that date."

WE have received the first four numbers of "Psychic Notes," a new 12-page, fortnightly paper, published in Calcutta, devoted to spiritual and occult research. Its objects are well and fully explained in the opening leader. In another portion of the first issue, a very instructive *résumé* of Spiritualistic periodical and other literature is given—to strike the sceptic with a sense of power. The phenomena transpiring through Mr. Eglinton's mediumship, are fully reported. Mr. Eglinton himself, contributes an account of a forméance from which it appears that Princes, Dukes, Barons, and Counts on the continent take an interest in the subject. When a light was struck no less a personage than the Duke of Cumberland found himself upon the table. The spirits would seem to be no respecters of persons. In an article in No. 2 it is well shewn that the alleged American "Katie King Exposure" leaves untouched the evidence of Professor Crookes as to the Katie King materialisations in his own house. If, however, the "Katie King Exposure" referred to, be that supposed to have been connected with Mrs. Holmes, it is a pity that the writer was not aware that Col. Olcott's inquiries and Professor Wallace's arguments have established that the exposure itself was a made-up one. An article in No. 4 deals with the points at issue between Theosophists and Spiritualists. The get-up of *Psychic Notes* is very neat.

At the Melbourne Progressive Lyceum, on Sunday last. Mr. Chas. Bamford, leader of "Excelsior Group," for the past two sessions, tendered his resignation on account of business duties necessitating his removal to Sydney. He expressed his regret at parting with his group and the Lyceum, both of which had become endeared to him by his association with them, and intimated his intention to join the workers in Sydney. The Conductor, Mr. Thos. Walker, replied on behalf of the Lyceum, expressing the regret both he and the Lyceum felt at losing both Mr. Bamford and his services, and giving good wishes for his welfare in his new sphere of action. Mr. Walker's remarks were endorsed by the acclamation of the Lyceum. Mr. Bamford leaves for Sydney to-day by the s. s. Cheviot.

ACCORDING to the *Philosophic Inquirer*, at a recent Diocesan Conference at Madras, there was a good deal of lamentation amongst the Christian missionaries over the hopelessness of Christian conversions amongst the Hindús, and the spread of Freethought.



## ANOTHER CONJUROR NONPLUSSED.

MANY of our readers will remember "Kellar," the Illusionist, who performed very cleverly the "Cabinet Trick" and a number of other imitations of Spiritual Phenomena, at St. George's Hall, a few years since. The following letter, extracted from the *Indian Daily News* of January 26th, contains Mr. Kellar's admission of the distinctive nature of Spiritual Phenomena.

## MR. KELLAR AND THE SPIRITS.

To the Editor of the "*Indian Daily News*."

SIR,—In your issue of the 13th January, I stated that I should be glad of an opportunity of participating in a Séance, with a view of giving an unbiased opinion as to whether, in my capacity of a professional Prestidigitateur, I could give a natural explanation of effects said to be produced by spiritual aid.

I am indebted to the courtesy of Mr. Eglinton, the spiritualistic medium now in Calcutta, and of his host Mr. J. Meugens, for affording me the opportunity I craved.

It is needless to say I went as a sceptic, but I must own that I have come away utterly unable to explain, by any natural means, the phenomena that I witnessed on Tuesday evening. I will give a brief description of what took place:—

I was seated in a brilliantly lighted room with Mr. Eglinton and Mr. Meugens; we took our places round a common teak-wood table, and after a few minutes the table began to sway violently backwards and forwards, and I heard noises such as might be produced by some one thumping under the table. I tried to discover the cause of this movement, but was unable to do so. After this, Mr. Eglinton produced two common slates, which I sponged, cleaned, and rubbed dry with a towel myself. Mr. Eglinton then handed me a box containing small crumbs of slate pencil; I selected one of these, and in accordance with Mr. Eglinton's directions, placed it on the surface of one of the slates, placing the other slate over it. I then firmly grasped the two slates at one of the corners; Mr. Eglinton held the other corner, our two free hands being clasped together. The slates were then lowered below the edge of the table, but remained in full view (the room remaining lighted all the time) instantaneously I heard a scratching noise, as might be produced by writing on a slate. In about fifteen seconds I heard three distinct knocks, on the slate, and I then opened them and found the following writing:—

"My name is Geary. Don't you remember me? we used to talk of this matter at the St. George's. I know better now."

Having read the above, I remarked that I knew no one by the name of Geary.

We then placed our hands on the table, and Mr. Eglinton commenced repeating the alphabet until he came to the letter G, when the table began to shake violently. This process was repeated till the name of Geary was spelt.

After this, Mr. Eglinton took a piece of paper and a pencil, and with a convulsive movement difficult to describe, he wrote very indistinctly the following words:

"I am Alfred Geary, of the *Lantern*; you know me and St. Ledger."

Having read this, I suddenly remembered having met both Mr. Geary and Mr. St. Ledger at Cape Town, South Africa, about four years ago, and the St. George's Hotel is the one I lived at there. Mr. Geary was the editor of the *Cape Lantern*. I believe he died some three years ago. Mr. St. Ledger was the editor of the *Cape Times*, and I believe is so still. Without going into details, I may mention that subsequently a number of other messages were written on the slates, which I was allowed to clean each time before they were used.

In respect to the above manifestations I can only say I do not expect my account of them to gain general credence. Forty-eight hours before I should not have believed any one who had described such manifestations under similar circumstances. I still remain a sceptic as regards Spiritualism, but I repeat my inability to explain

or account for what must have been an intelligent force that produced the writing on that slate, which, if my senses are to be relied on, was in no way the result of trickery or sleight of hand.—Yours, &c.,

HARRY KELLAR.

Calcutta, January 25th, 1882.

## THE OPERA HOUSE LECTURES.

MR. THOS. WALKER'S lectures at the Opera House continue to be well attended, his able review of Professor Max Müller's "Hibbert" lecture on the 9th ult., attracting an exceptionally large audience. Up to the present time Mr. Walker has lectured for the Victorian Association of Spiritualists whose basic objects are:—"The investigation and advancement of Spiritualistic truths and purposes," which is understood to include free Religious thought. Some two months since, Mr. Walker's attention was called by the committee to the undue prominence given to Iconoclastic subjects, and the paucity of Spiritualistic ones, but on his explaining that this was in pursuance of a course of action he had laid down and from which he could not conscientiously depart, a resolution was carried leaving the choice of subjects in his own hands. More recently however, Mr. Walker, feeling that he was not adequately representing the Association, tendered his resignation, which was accepted by the committee, and his engagement with that body will terminate on the 30th of the present month. Should Mr. Walker continue lecturing in Melbourne on his own account he will have the sympathy of at least a large number of the members of the Victorian Association and its support during the time their platform is vacant.

## "LITTLE HEARTS AND LITTLE HANDS."

WE are in receipt of the first copies of the above Children's Magazine. Since the suspension of the (Melbourne) *Lyceum Miniature*, the want of a children's journal to take its place has been felt by Spiritualists here, and *Little Hearts* will meet this want until we are able to republish a local journal. The number before us contains four good woodcuts, besides several interesting and instructive stories and fables (adapted to children between the ages of 7 and 15). To encourage the circulation it has been determined to issue it here at English price, viz., Sixpence.

THE Bishop of Bath and Wells, presiding at the Missionary Conference recently held at Yeovil, remarked that there were in his diocese 567 churches. Of these 283 gave no assistance to the Society for the propagation of the Gospel.

A HANDSOME subscription has been given to the Bradlaugh fund by the Marquis of Queensberry, for which he has been "cut" by the Prince of Wales. An American Republican paper commenting on the Prince's action says: "Yet of the two, Prince and Republican, Bradlaugh has led the cleaner life, and does."

IN Dunedin, the members of the Young Men's Christian Association having woefully failed, through their champion the Rev. A. C. Gillies, to defeat Mr. Denton in argument, are now (according to the *Sydney Bulletin*) threatening the latter gentleman with all the terrors of a prosecution for blasphemy.

THE *Reformer* for March contains a well-written article on the exclusion of Mr. Charles Bradlaugh from the House of Commons.

A correspondence on "Spiritualism" appeared in the *Federal Standard* during the latter part of January, the writers being Dr. Rohner and Mr. C. W. Smith, in the affirmative their opponents signing themselves "Not convinced" and "Earnest Inquirer." From a perusal of the correspondence we think the latter might have appropriately dropped the first half of his *non de plume*, and his coadjutor have substituted with advantage 'Won't be' for "Not" convinced.

## RE IGNORANCE OF SCEPTICS.

"I HAVE very often thought that the best work that could possibly be prepared in favour of an educated ministry, would be to send stenographers through those States where the census reveals the greatest amount of ignorance, to make verbatim reports of sermons that are actually preached, and publish them in a volume. Such a book would be the most remarkable exhibition of ignorance ever printed. Anyone who has not travelled extensively will be astonished to learn of the great number of altogether unlearned and ignorant preachers who minister regularly to large congregations. I have found that the deeper I got into the Brush, and the denser the ignorance of the people, the greater was the number of preachers.—From "In the Brush," by Rev. Dr. Pierson.

MR. J. N. MASKELYNE, writing to the London *Daily Telegraph*, says:—"Having for many years been recognised by the public as an anti-spiritualist and exposé of the fraude practised by spirit-media, it may surprise some of your readers to learn that I am a believer in apparitions. Several similar occurrences to those described by many of your correspondents have taken place in my own family, and in the families of near friends and relatives. The most remarkable one happened to my wife's mother some years ago. Late one evening, whilst sitting alone busily occupied with her needle, a strange sensation came over her, and upon looking up she distinctly saw her aged mother standing at the end of the room. She rubbed her weary eyes, and looked again, but the spectre had vanished. She concluded it was imagination, and retired to rest, thinking nothing more of the vision, until the next day brought the news that her mother, at about the same time the apparition had appeared, had fallen down in a fit and expired. I will also relate a circumstance which happened to myself, as it may tend to throw some light upon these common occurrences. When a boy, and learning to swim, I got out of my depth, and was very nearly drowned, being insensible when taken out of the water. My sensations were similar to those which have often been described by others. After the terrible feeling of suffocation I fell into a pleasant swoon, and a panorama of all the principal incidents of my life passed before me. The last thing I could remember was a vivid picture of my home. I saw my mother, and could describe minutely where she sat, and what she was doing. Upon returning home I kept the secret of what had happened from her. She, however, questioned me closely, and said she felt strangely uneasy and anxious about me, and thought some accident had befallen me. I am convinced that had it been night-time, and my mother alone, with little to occupy her attention, she would have seen my ghost, and perhaps the ghost of the water which closed over my head, as plainly as I saw her ghost, and the ghost of the room in which she was sitting. In after years, when pondering over these and other facts, I came to the conclusion that it was quite possible for one mind occasionally to influence another, no matter how great the distance apart, especially where 'two hearts beat as one,' or, more correctly speaking, where two brains vibrate in unison."—*Argus*, Dec. 30th.

## Advertisements.

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